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WAITING FOR JAVA.

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JANUARY, 1868.

Jack the Giant-Killer.

CHAPTER VII.

IN BLUNDERBORE'S CASTLE.



HEN Jack first made the acquaintance of the board on the Wednesday after he first came to the workhouse, the seven or eight gentlemen sitting round the green table greeted him quite as one of themselves as he came into the room. This was a dull September morning ; the mist seemed to have coozed in through the high window and continually opening door. When Jack passed through the outer or entrance room, he saw a heap of wistful faces and rags already waiting for admittance, some women and some children, a man with an arm in a sling, one or two workhouse *habitues*—there was no mistaking the hard coarse faces. Two old paupers were keeping watch at the door, and officiously flung it open for him to pass in. The guardians had greeted him very affably on the previous occasion,—a man of the world, a prosperous but eccentric vicar, was not to be treated like an everyday curate and chaplain. "Ah, how-d'ye-do, Mr. Trevithic ?" said the half-pay Captain, the chairman. The gas-fitter cleared his throat and made a

sort of an attempt at a bow. The wholesale grocer rubbed his two hands together,—Pitchley his name was I think,—for some reason or other, he exercised great influence over the rest. But on this eventful Wednesday morning the *Jupiter* had come out with this astounding letter—about themselves, their workhouse, their master, their private paupers. It was a day they never forgot, and the natural indignation of the board overflowed.

Perhaps Jack would have done better had he first represented matters to them, but he knew that at least two of the guardians were implicated. He was afraid of being silenced and of having the affair hushed up. He cared not for the vials of their wrath being emptied upon him so long as they cleansed the horrible place in their outpour. He walked in quite brisk and placid to meet the storm. The guardians had not all seen the *Jupiter* as they came dropping in. Oker, the gas-man, was late, and so was Pitchley as it happened, and when they arrived Jack was already standing in his pillory and facing the indignant chairman.

"My friend Colonel Hambledon wrote the letter from notes which I gave him," said Jack. "I considered publicity best;—under the circumstances, I could not be courteous," he said, "if I hoped to get through this disagreeable business at all effectually. I could not have selected any one of you gentlemen as confidants in common fairness to the others. I wished the inquiry to be complete and searching. I was obliged to brave the consequences."

"Upon my word I think you have acted right," said one of the guardians, a doctor, a bluff old fellow who liked frank speaking. But an indignant murmur expressed the dissent of the other members of the board.

"I have been here a fortnight," said Jack. "I had not intended speaking so soon of what I now wish to bring before your notice, but the circumstances seem to me so urgent and so ~~undesirable~~ that I can see no necessity for deferring my complaint any longer."

"Dear me, sir," said the gas-fitter, "I 'ope there's ~~nothing~~ wrong?"

"Everything, more or less," said Trevithic quietly. "In the first place I wish to bring before you several cases of great neglect on the part of Mr. and Mrs. Bulcox."

Here the chairman coloured up. "I think, Mr. Trevithic, we had better have the master present if you have any complaint to lodge against him."

"By all means," said Trevithic impassively, and he turned over his notes while one of the trembling old messengers went off for the master.

The master arrived and the matron too. "How-d'y-e-do, Bulcox?" said the chairman. Mrs. Bulcox dropped a respectful sort of curtsey, and Trevithic immediately began without giving time for the others to speak. He turned upon the master.

"I have a complaint to lodge against you and Mrs. Bulcox, and at the chairman's suggestion I waited for you to be present."

"Against me, sir?" said Bulcox, indignantly,

"Against me and Mr. Bulcox!" said the woman, with a bewildered, injured, saint-like sort of swoop.

"Yes," said Jack.

"Have you seen the letter in the *Jupiter?*" said the chairman gravely to Mr. Bulcox.

"Mr. Bulcox was good enough to post the letter himself," Jack interposed briskly. "It was to state that I consider that you, Mr. Bulcox, are totally unfit for your present situation as master. I am aware that you have good friends among these gentlemen, and that as far as they can tell, your conduct has always been a model of deference and exemplariness. Now," said Jack, "with the board's permission I will lodge my complaints against you in form." And here Trevithic pulled out his little book and read out as follows:—

"1. That the management and economy of this workhouse are altogether disgraceful.

"2. That you have been guilty of cruelty to two or three of the inmates.

"3. That you have embezzled or misappropriated certain sums of money allowed to you for the relief of the sick paupers under your care."

; But here the chairman, guardians, master and mistress, would hear no more; all interrupted Trevithic at once.

"Really, sir, you must substantiate such charges as these. Leave the room" (to the messengers at the door).

"I cannot listen to such imputations," from the master.

"What have we done to you that you should say such cruel, false things?" from the mistress. "Oh, sir," (to the chairman,) "say you don't believe him."

"If you will come with me now," Jack continued, "I think I can prove some of my statements. Do you know that the little children here are crying with hunger? Do you know that the wine allowed for the use of the sick has been regularly appropriated by these two wretches?" cried Trevithic in an honest fury. "Do you know that people here are lying in their beds in misery, at this instant, who have not been moved or touched for weeks and weeks; that the nurses follow the example of those who are put over them, and drink, and ill-use their patients; that the food is stinted, the tea is undrinkable, the meat is bad and scarcely to be touched; that the very water flows from a foul cesspool; that at this instant, in a cellar in the house, there are three girls shut up, without beds or any conceivable comfort,—one has been there four days and nights, another has been shut up twice in one week in darkness and unspeakable misery? Shall I tell you the crime of this culprit? She spoke saucily to the matron, and this is her punishment. Will you come with me now, and see whether or not I have been speaking the truth?"

There was not one word he could not substantiate. He had not been idle all this time, he had been collecting his proofs,—ghastly proofs they were.

The sight of the three girls brought blinded and staggering out of the cellar had more effect than all the statements and assertions which Mr. Trevithic had been at such great pains to get together. The Bulcoxes were doomed ; of this there could be no doubt. They felt it themselves as they plodded across the yard with the little mob of excited and curious guardians. Oker, the gas-fitter, took their part indeed, so did the grocer. The old doctor nearly fell upon the culprits then and there. The rest of the guardians seemed to be divided in their indignation against Jack for telling, against Bulcox for being found out, against the paupers for being ill-used, for being paupers ; against the reporter for publishing such atrocious libels. It was no bed of roses that Trevithic had made for himself.

A special meeting was convened for the end of the week.

As years go by, and we see more of life and of our fellow-creatures, the by-play of existence is curiously unfolded to us, and we may, if we choose, watch its threads twisting and untwisting, flying apart, and coming together. People rise from their sick-beds, come driving up in carriages, come walking along the street into each other's lives. As A. trips along by the garden-wall, Z. at the other end of the world, perhaps, is thinking that he is tired of this solitary bushman's life ; he was meant for something better than sheep-shearing and driving convicts, and he says to himself that he will throw it all up and go back to England, and see if there is not bread enough left in the old country to support one more of her sons. Here, perhaps, A. stoops to pick a rose, and places it in her girdle, and wonders whether that is C. on the rough pony riding along the road from market. As for Z., A. has never even conceived the possibility of his existence. But by this time Z. at the other end of the world has made up his mind, being a man of quick and determined action, and poor C.'s last chance is over, and pretty A., with the rose in her girdle, will never be his. Or it may be that Z., after due reflection, likes the looks of his tallows, X. and Y. come to the station, which had hitherto only been visited by certain very wild-looking letters of the alphabet, with feathers in their heads, and faces streaked with white paint, and A. gives her rose to C., who puts it in his button-hole with awkward country gallantry, quite unconscious of the chance they have both run that morning, and that their fate has been settled for them at the other end of the world.

When my poor A. burst into tears at the beginning of this story, another woman, who should have been Trevithic's wife, as far as one can judge speaking of such matters, a person who could have sympathized with his ambitions and understood the direction of his impulses, a woman with enough enthusiasm and vigour in her nature to carry her bravely through the tangles and difficulties which only choked and scratched and tired out poor Anne—this person, who was not very far off at the time, and no other than Mary Myles, said to some one who was with

her—and she gave a pretty sad smile and quick shake of the head as she spoke,—

"No, it is no use. I have nothing but friendliness, a horrible, universal feeling of friendliness, left for any of my fellow-creatures. I will confess honestly" (and here she lost her colour a little) "I did wrong once. I married my husband for a home—most people know how I was punished and what a miserable home it was. I don't mind telling you, Colonel Hambledon, for you well understand how it is that I must make the best of my life in this arid and lonely waste to which my own fault has brought me."

Mrs. Myles' voice faltered as she spoke, and she hung her head to hide the tears which had come into her eyes. And Colonel Hambledon took this as an answer to a question he had almost asked her, and went away. "If ever you should change your mind," he said, "you would find me the same a dozen years hence." And Mary only sighed and shook her head.

But all this was years ago—three years nearly by the Dulcie almanac—and if Mary Myles sometimes thought she had done foolishly when she sent Charles Hambledon away, there was no one to whom she could own it—not even to her cousin Fanny, who had no thoughts of marrying or giving in marriage, or wishes for happiness beyond the ordering her garden-beds and the welfare of her poor people.

Fanny one day asked her cousin what had become of her old friend the Colonel. Mary blushed up brightly, and said she did not know; she believed he was in Hammersley. Fanny, who was cutting out little flannel-vests for her school-children, was immediately lost in the intricacies of a gore, and did not notice the blush or the bright amused glance in the quiet grey eyes that were watching her at her benevolent toil. Snip, snip, sni-i-i-i-i-ip went the scissors with that triumphant screeching sound which all good housewives love to hear. Mary was leaning back in her chair, perfectly lazy and unoccupied, with her little white hands crossed upon her knees, and her pretty head resting against the chair. She would not have been sorry to have talked a little more upon a subject that was not uninteresting to her, and she tried to make Fanny speak.

"What do you think of him? Have you heard if he has come?" she asked, a little shyly.

"Oh, I don't know. No, I have not seen any of them for a long time," said Fanny absently. "Mary, are you not ashamed of being so lazy? Come and hold these strips."

Mary did as she was bid, and held out grey flannel strips at arms' length, and watching the scissors flashing, the pins twinkling, and the neat little heaps rising all about on the floor and the chairs and the tables. Then Mrs. Myles tried again. "Mr. Trevithic tells me that Colonel Hambledon is coming down to help him with this workhouse business. You will have to ask them both to dinner, Fanny."

Fanny did not answer for a minute. She hesitated, looked Mary full

in the face, and then said very thoughtfully, "Don't you think unbleached calico will be best to line the jackets with? It will keep the children warm, poor little things." The children's little backs might be warmed by this heap of snips and linings; but Mary suddenly felt as if all the wraps and flannels and calicos were piled upon her head, and choking and oppressing her, while all the while her heart was cold and shivering, poor thing! There are no flannel-jackets that I know of to warm sad hearts such as hers.

Fanny Garnier was folding up the last of her jackets; Mary, after getting through more work in half-an-hour than Fanny the methodical could manage in two, had returned to her big arm-chair, and was leaning back in the old listless attitude, dreaming dreams of her own, as her eyes wandered to the window and followed the line of the trees showing against the sky—when the door opened, and a stupid country man-servant suddenly introduced Jack, and the Colonel of Mrs. Myles' visionary recollections in actual person, walking into the very midst of the snippings and parings which were scattered about on the floor. Fanny was in no-wise disconcerted. She rather gloried in her occupation. I cannot say so much for Mary, who nervously hated any show or affectation of philanthropy, and who now jumped up hastily, with an exclamation, an outstretched hand, and a blush.

"There seems to be something going on," the Colonel said, standing over a heap of straggling "backs" and "arms."

"Do come upstairs out of this labyrinth of good intentions," cried Mary hastily. "Fanny, please put down your scissors, and let us go up."

"I'll follow," said Fanny placidly, and Mary had to lead the way alone to the long low bow-windowed drawing-room which Trevithic knew so well. She had regained her composure and spirits by the time they reached the landing at the top of the low flight of oak steps; and, indeed, both Hambledon and Mrs. Myles were far too much used to the world and its ways to betray to each other the smallest indication of the real state of their minds. Three years had passed since they parted. If Mary's courage had failed then, it was the Colonel's now that was wanting; and so it happens with people late in life—the fatal gift of experience is theirs. They mistrust, they hesitate, they bargain to the uttermost farthing; the jewel is there, but it is locked up so securely in strong boxes and wrappers, that it is beyond the power of the possessors to reach it. Their youth and simplicity is as much a part of them still as their placid middle age; but it is hidden away under the years which are heaped upon the past, and its glory is not shining as of old upon their brows. Mrs. Myles and the Colonel each were acting a part, and perfectly at ease as they discussed all manner of things that had been since they met, and might be before they met again. Fanny, having folded away the last of her flannels, came up placid and smiling too; and after half-an-hour the two gentlemen went away. Fanny forgot to ask them to dinner, and wondered why her cousin was so cross all the rest of the afternoon.

No, Mary would not go out. No, she had no headache, thank you. As soon as she had got rid of Fanny and her questionings, Mary Myles ran up to her room and pulled out some old, old papers and diaries, and read the old tear-stained records till new tears fell to wash away the old ones. Ah, yes, she had done rightly when she sent Hambledon away. Three years ago—it had seemed to her then that a lifetime of expiation would not be too long to repent of the wrong she had done when she married—loveless, thrifful, longing (and that, poor soul, had been her one excuse,) for the possible love that had never come to her. Life is so long, the time is so slow that passes wearily: she had been married three years, she had worn sackcloth three years; and now,—now if it were not too late, how gladly, how gratefully, she would grasp a hope of some life more complete than the sad one she had led ever since she could remember almost. Would it not be a sign that she had been forgiven if the happiness she had so longed for came to her at last? Mary wondered that her troubles had left no deeper lines upon her face; wondered that she looked so young still, so fair and smiling, while her heart felt so old; and smiled sadly at her own face in the glass.

And then as people do to whom a faint dawn of rising hope shows the darkness in which they have been living, Mrs. Myles began to think of some of her duties that she had neglected of late, and of others still in darkness for whom no dawn was nigh: and all the while, as people do whose hearts are full, she was longing for some one to speak to, some one wiser than herself to whom she could say, What is an expiation? can it, does it exist? is it the same as repentance? are we called upon to crush our hearts, to put away our natural emotions? Fanny would say yes, and would scorn her for her weakness, and cry out with horror at a second marriage. "And so would I have done," poor Mary thought, "if—if poor Tom had only been fond of me." And then the thought of Trevithic came to her as a person to speak to, a helper and adviser. He would speak the truth; he would not be afraid, Mary thought; and the secret remembrance that he was Hambledon's friend did not make her feel less confidence in his decisions.

CHAPTER VIII.

HASTY PUDDING AND BLOWS FROM A CLUB.

Mrs. Myles had been away some little time from her house at Sandsea, and from the self-imposed duties which were waiting undone until her return. Something of admiration for Trevithic's energy and enterprise made her think that very day of certain poor people she had left behind, and whom she had entirely forgotten. Before Fanny came home that evening, she sat down and wrote to her old friend, Miss Triquett, begging her to be so good as to go to Mrs. Gummers, and one or two more whose

names, ages, troubles, and families were down upon her list, and distribute a small sum of money enclosed. "I am not afraid of troubling you, dear Miss Triquett," wrote Mary Myles, in her big, picturesque handwriting. "I know your kind heart, and that you never grudge time nor fatigue when you can help any one out of the smallest trouble or the greatest. I have been seeing a good deal lately of Mr. Trevithic, who is of your way of thinking, and who has been giving himself an infinity of pains about some abuses in the workhouse here. He is, I do believe, one of the few people who could have come to the help of the poor creatures. He has so much courage and temper, such a bright and generous way of sympathizing and entering into other people's troubles, that I do not despair of his accomplishing this good work. My cousin and I feel very much with and for him. He looked ill and worn one day when I called upon him; but I am glad to think that coming to us has been some little change and comfort to him. He is quite alone, and we want him to look upon this place as his home while he is here. Your old acquaintance Colonel Hambleton has come down about this business. It is most horrifying. Can you imagine the poor sick people left with tipsy nurses, and more dreadful still, girls locked up in cellars by the cruel matron for days at a time? but this fact has just been made public.

"Goodness and enthusiasm like Mr. Trevithic's seem all the more beautiful when one hears such terrible histories of wickedness and neglect: one needs an example like his in this life to raise one from the unprofitable and miserable concerns of every day, and to teach one to believe in nobler efforts than one's own selfish and aimless wanderings could ever lead to unassisted.

"Pray remember me very kindly to Miss Moineaux and to Mrs. Trevithic, and believe me, dear Miss Triquett,

"Very sincerely yours,

"MARY MYLES.

"Is Mrs. Trevithic again suffering from neuralgia? Why is not she able to be with her husband?"

"Why, indeed?" said Miss Moineaux, hearing this last sentence read out by Miss Triquett. This excellent spinster gave no answer. She read this letter twice through deliberately; then she tied her bonnet securely on, and trotted off to Gummers and Co. Then, having dispensed the bounties and accepted the thanks of the poor creatures, she determined to run the chance of finding Mrs. Trevithic at home. "It is my painful duty," said Triquett to herself, shaking her head—"my painful duty Anne Trevithic should go to her husband; and I will tell her so. If I were Mr. Trevithic's wife, should I leave him to toil alone? No, I should not. Should I permit him to seek sympathy and consolation with another, more fascinating perhaps? No, certainly not. And deeply grateful should I have felt to her who warned me on my fatal career; and surely my young friend Anne will be grateful to her old friend whose finger arrests

her on the very edge of the dark precipice." Miss Triquett's reflections had risen to eloquence by the time she reached the rectory door. A vision of Anne clinging to her in tears, imploring her advice, of John shaking her warmly by the hand and murmuring that to Miss Triquett they owed the renewed happiness of their home, beguiled the way. "Where is Mrs. Trevithic?" she asked the butler, in her deepest voice. "Leave us," said Miss Triquett to the bewildered menial as he opened the drawing-room door and she marched into the room; and then encountering Mrs. Trevithic, she suddenly clasped her in her well-meaning old arms.

"I have that to say to you," said Miss Triquett, in answer to Anne's amazed exclamation, "which I fear will give you pain; but were I in your place, I should wish to hear the truth." The good old soul was in earnest; her voice trembled, and her little black curls shook with agitation.

"Pray do not hesitate to mention anything," said Mrs. Trevithic, surprised but calm, and sitting down and preparing to listen attentively. "I am sure anything you would like to have attended to——"

Miss Triquett, at the invocation, pulled out the letter from her pocket. "Remember, only remember this," she said, "this comes from a young and attractive woman." And then in a clear and ringing voice she read out poor Mary's letter, with occasional unspeakable and penetrating looks at Anne's calm features.

Poor little letter! It had been written in the sincerity and innocence of Mary's heart. Any one more deeply read in such things might have wondered why Colonel Hambleton's name should have been brought into it; but as it was, it caused a poor jealous heart to beat with a force, a secret throb of sudden jealousy, that nearly choked Anne for an instant as she listened, and a faint pink tinge came rising up and colouring her face.

"Remember, she is *very* attractive," Miss Triquett re-echoed, folding up the page. "Ah! be warned, my dear young friend. Go to him; throw yourself into his arms; say, 'Dearest, darling husband, your little wife is by your side once more; I will be your comforter!' Do not hesitate." Poor old Triquett, completely carried away by the excitement of the moment, had started from her seat, and with extended arms had clasped an imaginary figure in the air. It was ludicrous, it was pathetic to see this poor old silly meddlesome creature quivering, as her heart beat and bled for the fate of others. She had no tear or emotions of her own. It was absurd—was it not?—that she should care so deeply for things which could not affect her in the least degree. There was Anne, with her usual self-possession, calmly subduing her irritation. She did not smile; she did not frown; she did not seem to notice this momentary ebullition. To me it seems that, of the two, my sympathy is with Miss Triquett. Let us be absurd, by all means, if that is the price which must be paid for something which is well worth its price.

Miss Triquett's eyes were full of tears. "I am impetuous, Mrs.

Trevithic," she said. "My aunt has often found fault with me for it. Pray excuse me if I have interfered unwarrantably."

"Interference between married people rarely does any good, Miss Triquett," said Anne, standing up with an icy platitude, and unmistakably showing that she considered the visit at an end.

"Good-by," said poor Miss Triquett, wistfully. "Remember me most kindly to your papa."

"Certainly," said Mrs. Trevithic. "I am afraid you will have a disagreeable walk back in the rain, Miss Triquett. Good-evening. Pray give my compliments to Miss Moineaux."

The old maid trudged off alone into the mud and the rain, with a mortified sense of having behaved absurdly, disappointed and tired, and vaguely ashamed and crestfallen. The sound of the dinner-bell ringing at the rectory as she trudged down the hill in the dark and dirt, did not add to her cheerfulness.

Anne, with flushed red cheeks and trembling hands, as Triquett left the room, sank down into her chair for a moment, and then suddenly starting up, busied herself exactly as usual with her daily task of putting the drawing-room in order before she went up to dress. Miss Triquett's seat she pushed right away out of sight. She collected her father's writing-materials and newspapers, and put them straight. She then re-read her husband's last few lines. There was nothing to be gleaned from them. She replenished the flower-stands, and, suddenly remembering that it was Mrs. Myles who had given them to her, she seized one tall glass fabric and all but flung it angrily on the ground. But reflecting that if it were broken it would spoil the pair, she put it back again into its corner, and contented herself with stuffing in all the ugliest scraps of twigs, dead leaves and flowers from the refuse of her basket.

The rector and his daughter dined at half-past five; it was a whim of the old man's. Anne clutched Dulcie in her arms before she went down after dressing. The child had never seen her mamma so excited, and never remembered being kissed like that before by her. "D'oo lub me very mush to-day, mamma?" said Dulcie, pathetically. "Is it toz I 'ave my new fock?"

Old Mr. Bellingham came in at the sound of the second bell, smiling as usual, and rubbing his comfortable little fat hands together; he did not remark that anything was amiss with his daughter, though he observed that there was not enough cayenne in the gravy of the veal cutlets, and that the cook had forgotten the necessary teaspoonful of sugar in the soup. For the first time since he could remember Anne failed to sympathize with his natural vexation, and seemed scarcely as annoyed as usual at the neglect which had been shown. Mr. Bellingham was vexed with her for her indifference: he always left the scolding to her; he liked everything to go smooth and comfortable, and he did not like to be called upon personally to lose his temper. "For what we have received"—and the butler retires with the crumbs and the cloths, and the little old

gentleman—who has had a fire lighted, for the evenings are getting chilly—draws comfortably in to his chimney-corner; while Anne, getting up from her place at the head of the table, says abruptly that she must go upstairs and see what Dulcie is about. A restless mood had come over her; something unlike anything she had ever felt before. Little Triquett's eloquence, which had not even seemed to disturb Anne at the time, had had full time to sink into this somewhat torpid apprehension, and excite Mrs. Trevithic's indignation. It was not the less fierce because it had smouldered so long.

"Insolent creature!" Anne said to herself, working herself up into a passion; "how dare she interfere? Insolent ridiculous creature! 'Remember that that woman is attractive'—How dare she speak so to me? Oh, they are all in league—in league against me!" cried poor Anne, with a moan, wringing her hands with all the twinkle of stones upon her slim white fingers. "John does not love me, he never loved me! He will not do as I wish, though he promised and swore at the altar he would. And she—she is spreading her wicked toils round him, and keeping him there, while I am here alone—all alone; and he leaves me exposed to the insolence of those horrible old maids. Papa eats his dinner and only thinks of the flavour of the dishes, and Dulcie chatters to her doll and don't care, and no one comes when I ring," sobbed Mrs. Trevithic in a burst of tears, violently tugging at the bell-rope. "Oh, it is a shame, a shame!"

Only as she wiped away the tears a gleam of determination came into Mrs. Trevithic's blue eyes, and the flush on her pale cheeks deepened. She had taken a resolution. This is what she would do—this was her resolution: she would go and confront him there on the spot and remind him of his duty—he who was preaching to others. It was her right; and then—and then she would leave him for ever, and never return to Sandsea to be scoffed at and jeered at by those horrible women, said Anne vaguely to herself as the door opened and the maid appeared. "Bring me a *Bradshaw, Judson*," said Mrs. Trevithic, very much in her usual tone of voice, and with a great effort recovering her equanimity. The storm had passed over, stirring the waters of this overgrown pool, breaking away the weeds which were growing so thickly on the stagnant surface, and rippling the slow shallows underneath. It seems a contradiction to write of this dull and unimpressionable woman now and then waking and experiencing some vague emotion and realization of experiences which had been slowly gathering, and apparently unnoticed, for a long time before: but who does not count more than one contradiction among their experiences? It was not Anne's fault that she could not understand, feel quickly and keenly, respond to the calls which stronger and more generous natures might make upon her; her tears flowed dull and slow long after the cause, unlike the quick bright drops that would spring to Mary Myles' clear eyes—Mary whom the other woman hated with a natural, stupid, persistent hatred that nothing ever could change.

Judson, the maid, who was not deeply read in human nature, and who respected her mistress immensely as a model of decision, precision, deliberate determination, was intensely amazed to hear that she was to pack up that night, and that Mrs. Trevithic would go to London that evening by the nine-o'clock train.

"Send for a fly directly, Judson, and dress Miss Dulcie."

"Dress Miss Dulcie?" Judson asked, bewildered.

"Yes, Miss Dulcie will come too," said Anne, in a way that left no remonstrance.

She did not own it to herself; but by a strange and wayward turn of human nature, this woman—who was going to reproach her husband, to leave him for ever, to cast herself adrift from him—took Dulcie with her: Dulcie, a secret defence, a bond and strong link between them, that she knew no storm or tempest would ever break.

Mr. Bellingham was too much astounded to make a single objection. He thought his daughter had taken leave of her senses when she came in and said good-by.

Poor thing, the storm raging in her heart was a fierce one. Gusts of passion and jealousy were straining and beating and tearing; "sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compass lost." Poor Anne, whose emotions were all the more ungovernable when they occasionally broke from the habitual restraint in which she held them, sat in her corner of the carriage, picturing to herself Trevithic enslaved, enchanted. If she could have seen the poor fellow adding up long lists of figures in his dreary little office, by the light of a smoking lamp, I think her jealousy might have been appeased.

All the way to town Anne sat silent in her corner; but if she deserved punishment, poor thing, she inflicted it then upon herself, and with an art and an unrelenting determination for which no other executioner would have found the courage.

They reached the station at last, with its lights and transient life and bustle. A porter called a cab. Dulcie, and the maid, and Mrs. Trevithic got in. They were to sleep at the house of an old lady, a sister of Mr. Bellingham's, who was away, as Anne knew, but whose housekeeper would admit them.

And then the journey began once more across dark passages, winding thoroughfares, interminable in their lights and darkness, across dark places that may have been squares. The darkness changed and lengthened the endless road: they had left Oxford Street, with its blazing shops; they had crossed the Park's blackness; the roll of the wheels was like the tune of some dismal night-march. The maid sat with Dulcie asleep in her arms, but presently Dulcie woke up with a shrill piteous outcry. "I'se so ti'ed," she sobbed in the darkness, the coldness, the dull drip of the rain, the monotonous sound of the horse's feet striking on the mud. "I wan' my tea; I'se so ti'ed, wan' my little bed"—this was her piteous litany.

Anne was very gentle and decided with her, only once she burst out, "Oh, don't, don't, I cannot bear it, Dulcie."

Our lives often seem to answer strangely to our wishes. Is there some hidden power by which our spirits work upon the substance of which our fate is built. Jack wished to fight. Assault him now, dire spirit of ill-will, of despondency, and that most cruel spirit of all called calumny. This tribe of giants are like the bottle-monsters of the Arabian Nights, intangible, fierce, sly, remorseless, springing up suddenly, mighty shadows coming in the night and striking their deadly blows. They raise their clubs (and these clubs are not trees torn from the forest, but are made from the forms of human beings massed together), and the clubs fall upon the victim and he is crushed.

There was a brandy-and-water weekly meeting at Hammersley, called "Ours," every Thursday evening, to which many of the tradespeople were in the habit of resorting and there discussing the politics of the place. Mr. Bulcox had long been a member, so was Pitchley the grocer, and Oker himself did not disdain to join the party; and as John was not there to contradict them, you may be sure these people told their own story. How it spread I cannot tell, but it is easy to imagine: one rumour after another to the hurt and disadvantage of poor Trevithic began to get about. Reformers are necessarily unpopular among a certain class. The blind and the maimed and the halt worshipped the ground Trevithic stood upon at first. "He was a man as would see to their rights," they said; "and if he had his way, would let them have their snuff and a drop of something comfortable. He had his cranks. These open windows gave 'em the rheumatics, and this sloppin' and washin' was all along of it, and for all the talk there were some things but what they wouldn't deny was more snug in Bulcox's time than now; but he were a good creature for all that, Mr. Trevithic, and meant well he did," &c. &c. Only when the snuff and the comfortable drop did not come as they expected, and the horrors of the past dynasty began to be a little forgotten—at the end of a month or so of whitewashing and cleansing and reforming, the old folks began to grumble again much as usual. Trevithic could not take away their years and their aches and pains and wearinesses, and make the workhouse into a bower of roses and the old people into lovely young lassos and gallant lads again.

He had done his best, but he could not work miracles.

It happened that a Lincolnshire doctor writing from Downham to the *Jupiter* not long after, eloquently describing the symptoms, the treatment, the means of prevention for this new sort of cholera, spoke of the devotion of some and the curious indifference of others. "Will it be believed," he said, "that in some places the clergyman has been known to abandon his flock at the first threat of danger—a threat which in one especial case at F. not far from here was not fulfilled, although the writer can testify from his own experience to the truth of the above statement?"

As far as poor Jack's interests were concerned it would have been better for him if the cholera had broken out at Featherston ; it would have brought him back to his own home. But Penfold recovered, Mrs. Hodge—the only other patient—died, Hodge married again immediately, and that was the end of it. "Ours" took in the *Jupiter*; somebody remembered that Downham and Featherston were both in the same neighbourhood ; some one else applied the story, and Bulcox and the gas-fitter between them concocted a paragraph for the *Anvil*, the great Hammersley organ ; and so ill-will and rumour did their work, while Jack went his rounds in the wards of St. Magdalene's, looking sadder than the first day he had come, although the place was cleaner, the food warmer and better, the sick people better tended than ever before ; for the guardians had been persuaded to let in certain deaconesses of the town—good women, who nursed for love and did not steal the tea. But in the meantime this odd cabal which had set in had risen and grown, and from every side Jack began to meet with cold looks and rebuffs. He had ill-used his wife, deserted her, they said ; abandoned his parish from fear of infection. He had forged, he had been expelled from his living. There was nothing that poor Jack was not accused of by one person or another. One day when his friend Austin came in with the last number of the *Anvil*, and showed him a very spiteful paragraph about himself, Jack only shrugged his shoulders. "We understand that the gentleman whose extraordinary revelations respecting the management of our workhouse have been met by some with more credence than might have been expected, considering the short time which had passed since he first came among us, is the rector alluded to in a recent letter to the *Jupiter* from a medical man, who deserted his parish at the first alarm of cholera." "Can this be true ?" said Austin, gravely.

"Mrs. Hodge certainly died of the cholera," Jack answered, "and Penfold was taken ill and recovered. Those are the only two cases in my parish."

A little later in the day, as the two young men were walking along the street, they met Mr. Oker puffing along the pavement. He stopped as usual to rub his hands when he saw Trevithic.

"As your attention been called, sir," he said, "to a paragraft in the *Anvil*, that your friends should contradict, if possible, sir ? It's mos' distressin' when such things gets into the papers. They say at the club that some of the guardians is about to ask for an account of the sick-fund money, sir, which, I believe, Mr. Skipper put into your 'ands, sir. For the present this paragraft should be contradicted, if possible, sir."

Oker was an odious creature, insolent and civil ; and as he spoke he gave a sly, spiteful glance into Jack's face. Trevithic was perfectly unmoved, and burst out laughing. "My good Mr. Oker," he said, "you will be sorry to hear that there is no foundation whatever in the paragraph. It is some silly tittle-tattling tale, which does not affect me in the least. If any one is to blame, it is Mr. Skipper, the workhouse

chaplain, who was then in my place. You can tell your friends at the club that they have hit the wrong man. 'Good-day.' And the young fellow marched on his way with Mr. Austin, leaving Oker to recover as best he could.

"I'm afraid they will give you trouble yet," Austin said. "King Stork though you are after that little Log of a Skipper."

When Jack appeared before the board on the next Wednesday, after the vote had been passed for dismissing the Bulcoxes, it seemed to him that one-half of the room greeted his entrance with a scowl of ill-will and disgust, the other half with alarm and suspicion. No wonder. It was Jack's belief that some of the guardians were seriously implicated in the charges which had been brought against Bulcox; others were certainly so far concerned that the *Jupiter* had accused them of unaccountable neglect; and nobody likes to be shown up in a leader even for merely neglecting his duties.

All this while the workhouse had been in a commotion; the master and mistress were only temporarily fulfilling their duties until a new couple should have been appointed. The board, chiefly at the instance of Oker the gas-fitter, and Pitchley the retail grocer, did not press the charges brought against Mr. Bulcox; but they contented themselves with dismissing him and his wife. It was not over-pleasant for Trevithic to meet them about the place, as he could not help doing occasionally; but there was no help for it, and he bore the disagreeables of the place as best he could, until Mr. and Mrs. Evans, the newly-appointed master and matron, made their appearance. The board was very civil, but it was anything but cordial to Trevithic. Jack, among other things, suspected that Pitchley himself supplied the bad tea and groceries which had been so much complained of, and had exchanged various bottles of port from the infirmary for others of a better quality, which were served at the master's own table. So the paupers told him.

Meanwhile the opposition had not been idle. It was Bulcox himself, I think, who had discovered that Jack, in administering the very limited funds at his disposal, had greatly neglected the precaution of tickets. One or two ill-conditioned people, whom Trevithic had refused to assist, had applied to the late master, and assured him that Trevithic was not properly dispensing the money at his command. One tipsy old woman in particular was very indignant; and, judging by her own experience, did not hesitate to accuse the chaplain of keeping what was not his own.

This credible witness in rags and battered wares stood before the chairman when Jack came in. It seems impossible that anybody should have seriously listened to a complaint so absurd and unlikely. But it must be remembered that many of the people present were already ill disposed, that some of them were weak, and others stupid, and they would not have been sorry to get out of their scrape by discovering Jack to be of their own flesh and blood.

Trevithic heard them without a word, mechanically buttoning up his coat, as he had a trick of doing, and then in a sudden indignation he tore it open, and from his breast-pocket drew the small book in which he had made all his notes. "Here," said he, "are my accounts. They were made *hastily* at the time, but they are accurate, and you will see that I have paid every farthing away that was handed over to me by Mr. Skipper, and about twice the amount besides, out of my own pocket. You can send for the people to whom I have paid the money, if you like." The little book went travelling about from one hand to another, while the remorseless Trevithic continued, "I now in my turn demand that the ledgers of these gentlemen"—blazing round upon the retail grocer and Oker the gas-fitter—"be produced here immediately upon the spot, without any previous inspection, and that I, too, may have the satisfaction of clearing up my doubts as to their conduct." "That is fair enough," said one or two of the people present. "It's quite impossible, unheard of," said some of the others; but the majority of the guardians present were honest men, who were roused at last, and the ledgers were actually sent for.

I have no time here to explain the long course of fraud which these ledgers disclosed. The grocer was found to have been supplying the house at an enormous percentage, with quantities differing in his book and in that of the master, who must again have levied a profit. The gas-fitter, too, turned out to be the contractor from a branch establishment, and to have also helped himself. This giant certainly fell dead upon the floor when he laid open his accounts before the board, for Hammersley work-house is now one of the best managed in the whole kingdom.

CHAPTER IX.

JACK HELPS TO DISENCHANT THE BEAUTIFUL LADY.

FANNY GARNIER bustled home one afternoon, brimming over, good soul, with rheumatisms, chicken-poxes, and other horrors that were not horrors to her, or interjections, or lamentations; but new reasons for exertions which were almost beyond her strength at times—as now, when she said wearily, "that she must go back to her ward; some one was waiting for things that she had promised." She was tired, and Mary, half ashamed, could not help offering to go in her cousin's place. It seemed foolish to refrain from what she would have done yesterday in all simplicity, because there was a chance, that Hambledon was there to-day, or Trevithic, who was Hambledon's friend, if not quite Hambledon himself, who talked to him and knew his mind, and could repeat his talk.

When Mary reached the infirm ward, where she was taking her jellies, and bird's-eye, and liquorice, her heart gave a little flutter, for she saw that two figures were standing by one of the beds. One was Jack, who

turned round to greet her as she came up with her basket on her arm. The other was Hambledon, who looked at her and then turned away. As for all the old women in their starched nightcaps, it was a moment of all-absorbing excitement to them,—sitting bolt upright on their beds, and bowing affably, as was the fashion in the infirm ward. It was quite worth while to be civil to the gentry, let alone manners; you never knew but what they might have a quarter-of-a-pound of tea, or a screw of snuff in their pockets. “Law bless you, it was not such as them as denies themselves anythink they may fancy.” Such was the Hammersley creed.

As she came up, Mary made an effort, and in her most self-possessed and woman-of-the-worldest manner, put out her hand again and laughed, and exclaimed at this meeting. Her shyness, and the very effort she made to conceal it, gave her an artificial manner that chilled and repelled poor Hambledon as no shyness or hesitation would have done. “She’s no heart,” said the poor Colonel to himself. “She don’t remember. She would only laugh at me.” He forgot that Mary was not a child, not even a very young woman; that this armour of expediency had grown up naturally with years and with the strain of a solitary life. It is a sort of defence to which the poor little hedgehogs of women, such as Mary Myles, resort sometimes. It meant very little, but it frightened the Colonel away. Mrs. Myles heard him go as she bent over poor old Mrs. Crosspoint, and her heart gave a little ache, which was not entirely of sympathy for ‘the poor old thing’s troubles.

However, Mary had a little talk with Trevithic in the dark as she crossed the courts and passages, and he walked beside her, which did her good, though she said nothing that any one who did not know would have construed into more than it seemed to mean.

She told him a little about her past life. She did not tell him that Colonel Hambledon had once asked her to come into his life; but Trevithic knew all that she wanted to say as he listened to the voice speaking in the dark,—the sweet low voice with the music in it,—a revelation came to him there in the archway of that narrow workhouse stone passage.

A revelation came to him, and that instant, as was his way, he acted upon it. “I think some people—” he began, and then he stopped. “I think you should secure a friend,” he said quickly, in an odd voice. “You should marry,” and he faltered, as he made way for two poor women who limped past on their way to their corners in the great pigeon-holes case of human suffering. That little shake in his voice frightened Trevithic. What was it to him? How did Mary Myles’ fate concern him? He let her out at the great gate. He did not offer to walk back with her. The great iron bars closed with a clang, as she went away out into the dim world that was surging round about these prison walls. He would go back to Anne, Trevithic said to himself; even while the last grateful words were uttering in his ears, and the sweet quick eyes still lighting up for him the dulness of the stony place. Mary Myles went back

alone ; and all that night Jack lay awake thinking, turning some things in his mind and avoiding others, wondering what he should say to Hambledon, what he should leave unsaid ; for some nameless power had taught him to understand now, as he never had understood before, what was passing in other minds and hearts. A power too mighty for my poor Jack to encounter or hope to overcome in fight, a giant from whom the bravest can only turn away—so gentle is he, so beautiful, so humble in his irresistible might, that though many might conquer him if they would, they will not, and that is the battle.

And I think this giant must have been that nameless one we read of in the story whom Jack did not care to fight, but he locked him up and barred him in the castle, and bolted gates and kept him safe behind them. The giant who in return for this strange treatment gave Jack the sword of sharpness and the cap of knowledge. The sword pricked fiercely enough, the cap of knowledge weighed, ah, too heavily, but Jack, as we know, did not shrink from pain.

The imprisoned giant touched some kindly chord in Jack's kind heart. Was he not Hambledon's friend ? was he not a link between two people, very near and yet very far apart ? Had Mary Myles' kindness been quite disinterested ? he asked himself, a little bitterly, before he spoke ;—spoke a few words which made Charles Hambledon flush up and begin to tug at his moustache, and which decided Mary Myles' fate as much as Anne Bellingham's tears had decided Jack's three years ago.

" Why don't you try again ? " Trevithic said. " I think there might be a chance for you."

The Colonel did not answer, but went on pulling at his moustache. Trevithic was silent, too, and sighed. " I never saw any one like her," he said at last. " I think she carries a blessing wherever she goes. I, who am an old married man, may say so much, mayn't I ? I have seen some men go on their knees for gratitude for what others are scarcely willing to put out their hands to take."

Poor Jack ! The cap of knowledge was heavy on his brow as he spoke. He did not look to see the effect of his words. What would he not have said to serve her ? He walked away to the desk where he kept his notes and account-books, and took pen and paper, and began to write.

" It is a lucky thing for me that you are a married man," the Colonel said, with an uneasy laugh. " It's one's fate. They won't like the connexion at home. She don't care about it one way or another, for all you say ; and yet I find myself here again and again. I have a great mind to go this very evening."

" I am writing to her now," Trevithic answered, rather incoherently, after a minute. " The ladies have promised to come with me to-morrow to see the rectory-house at St. Bigots. I shall call for them about twelve o'clock ; and it will take us a quarter of an hour to walk there."

It was a bright autumn morning, glittering and brilliant. Jack stood

waiting for Mrs. Myles and her cousin in the little wood at the foot of the garden slope, just behind the lodge. A bird, with outstretched wings, fluttered from the ivy bed at his feet, and went and perched upon the branch of a tree. All the noises of life came to him from the town, glistening between the gleam of the trees : the fall of the hammer from the woodyard where the men were at work, and the call of the church-bell to prayer, and the distant crow of the farm-yard upon the far-off hill, and the whistle of the engine, starting and speeding through the quiet country valley to the junction in the town, where the great world's gangways met and diverged.

All this daily life was going on, and John Trevithic struck with his stick at a dead branch of a tree. Why was work, so simple and straightforward a business to some honest folks, so tangled and troubled and unsatisfactory to others. In daily life hand labour is simple enough. Old Peascud, down below in the kitchen-garden, turns over mother earth, throbbing with life and all its mysteries, with what he calls a "perty shovel," and pats it down, and complacently thinks it is his own doing that the ivy slips cut off the branch which he has stuck into the ground are growing and striking out fresh roots.

Peascud is only a sort of shovel himself, destined to keep this one small acre, out of the square acres which cover the surface of the earth, in tolerable order, and he does it with a certain amount of spurring and pushing, and when his day's work is over hangs up comfortably on a nail and rests with an easy mind; but Jack, who feels himself a shovel too, has no laws to guide him. Some of the grain he has sown has come up above the ground, it is true, but it is unsatisfactory after all ; he does not know whether or not his slips are taking root—one or two of them he has pulled up, like the children do, to see whether they are growing.

As Jack stands moralising, crow cocks, ring bells, strike hammers. It was a fitting chorus, distant and cheerful, and suggestive to the sweet and brilliant life of the lady for whom he waits. Not silence, but the pleasant echoes of life should accompany her steps, the cheerful strains of summer, and the bright colours of spring. Trevithic saw everything brightened and lighted up by her presence, and thought that it was so in fact, poor fellow. Sometimes in a foul ward, when the dull sights and sounds oppressed him almost beyond bearing, with a sudden breath of relief and happiness the image of this charming and beautiful woman would pass before him, sweet and pure, and lovely and unsoiled amidst lovely things, far away from these ghastly precincts. What had such as she to do with such as these ? Heaven forbid that so fair a bird, with its tender song and glancing white plumage, should come to be choked and soiled and caged in the foul dungeons to which he felt called. John Trevithic, like many others, exaggerated, I think, to himself the beauty and the ugliness of the things he looked upon as they appeared to others, not that things are not ten thousand times more beautiful and more hideous too, perhaps, than we have eyes to see or hearts to realise, but

they are not so as far as the eyes with which others see them are concerned.' To this sweet and beautiful and graceful woman the world was not so fair a place as to this care-worn man with his haggard eyes and sad knowledge of life. He thought Mrs. Myles so far above him and beyond him in all things, that he imagined that the pains of others must pain her and strike her soft heart more cruelly even than himself, that the loveliness of life was more necessary to her a thousand times than it could be to him.

Meanwhile all the little dried pine-twigs were rustling and rippling, for she was coming down the little steep path, holding up her muslin skirts as she came, and stepping with her rapid slender footsteps, stooping and then looking up to smile. Mrs. Myles was always well-dressed—there was a certain completeness and perfection of dainty smoothness and freshness about all her ways which belonged to her dress and her life and her very loves and dislikes. The soft flutter of her ribbons belong to her as completely as the pointed ends of old Peascud's Sunday shirt-collars and the broad stiff taper of his best waistcoat do to him, or as John Trevithic's fancies as he stands in the fir-wood. Another minute and she is there beside him, holding out her hand and smiling with her sweet still eyes, and the bird flutters away from its branch. "Fanny cannot come," she said. "We must go without her, Mr. Trevithic."

A something,—I cannot tell you what, told Jack as she spoke that this was the last walk they would ever take together. It was one of those feelings we all know and all believe in at the bottom of our hearts. This something coming I know not from whence, going I know not where, suddenly began to speak in the silent and empty chambers of poor Trevithic's heart, echoing mournfully, but with a warning in its echoes that he had never understood before. This something seemed to say, No, No, No. It was like a bell tolling as they walked along the road. Jack led the way, and they turned off the high-road across a waste, through sudden streets springing up around them, across a bridge over a branch of the railway, into a broad black thoroughfare, which opened into the quiet street leading into Bolton Fields. The fields had long since turned to stones and iron railings enclosing a churchyard, in the midst of which a church had been built. The houses all round the square were quaint red brick dwellings, with here and there a carved lintel to a doorway, and old stone steps whitened and scrubbed by three or four generations of patient housemaids. The trees were bare behind the iron railing, there was silence, though the streets beyond Bolton Fields were busy like London streets. Trevithic stopped at the door of one of the largest of these dwellings. It had straight windows like the others, and broken stone steps upon which the sun was shining, and tall iron railings casting slant shadows on the pavement. It looked quaint and narrow, with its high rooms and blackened bricks, but it stood in sunshine. A child was peeping from one of the many-paned windows, and some birds were fluttering under the deep eaves of the roof.

Jack led the way into the dark-panelled entrance, and opened doors and windows, and ran upstairs. Mrs. Myles fitted here and there, suggested, approved of the quaint old house, with the sunny landings for Dulcie to play on, and the convenient cupboards for her elders, and quaint recesses, and the pleasant hints of an old world, more prosy and deliberate and less prosaic than to-day. There was a pretty little niche on the stairs, where Jack fancied Dulcie perching, and a window looking into the garden; there was a little wooden dining-room, and a study with the worn bookcases let into the walls. It was all in good order, for Trevithic had had it cleaned and scrubbed. The house was more cheerful than the garden at the back, where stone and weeds seemed to be flourishing unmolested.

"It is almost time to go," Mrs. Myles said, looking at her watch.

"You have not half seen the garden," said Trevithic. "Come this way." And Mary followed, wrapping her velvet cloak more closely round her slender shoulders.

They were standing in the little deserted garden of the house, for the garden was all damp, as gardens are which are rarely visited. The back of the house, less cheerful than the front, was close shuttered, except for the windows Trevithic had opened. Some dreary aloe-trees were sprouting their melancholy spikes, a clump of fir-trees and laurel-bushes was shuddering in one corner; a long grass-grown lawn, with rank weeds and shabby flower-beds, reached from the black windows to the stony paths, in which, in some unaccountable manner, as is usual in deserted places, the sand and gravel had grown into stones and lumps of earth and clay.

"This is very dreary," said Mrs. Myles, pulling her cloak still closer round her. "I like the house, but no one could be happy walking in this garden."

Trevithic smiled a little sadly. "I don't know," he said. "I don't think happiness depends upon locality."

Poor fellow, his outward circumstances were so prosperous, his inner life so sad and untoward. No wonder that he undervalued external matters, and counted all lost that was not from within.

Mary Mylos blushed, as she had a way of blushing when she was moved, and her voice failed into a low measured music of its own. "I envy you," she said. "You do not care like me for small things, and are above the influences of comfort and discomfort, of mere personal gratifications. It has been the curse of my life that I have never risen above anything, but have fallen shamefully before such easy temptations that I am ashamed even to recall them. I wonder what it is like," she said, with her bright, half-laughing, half-admiring smile, "to be, as you are, above small distractions, and able to fight real and great battles—and win them too?" she added, kindly and heartily.

A very faint mist came before Trevithic's eyes as Mary spoke, unconsciously encouraging him, unknowingly cheering him with words and appreciation—how precious she did not know, nor did he dare to tell himself.

"I am afraid what you describe is a sensation very few people know," said Trevithic. "We are all, I suspect, trying to make the best of our defeats; triumphant, if we are not utterly routed."

"And have you been routed at Featherston?" Mrs. Myles asked.

"Completely," said Trevithic. "Anne will retreat with flying colours, but I am ignobly defeated, and only too thankful to run away and come and live here—in this very house perhaps—if she will consent to it."

"Anne is a happy woman to have any one to want her," said Mrs. Myles, coming back to her own thoughts with a sigh; "people love me, but nobody wants me."

"Here is a friend of yours, I think," said Jack, very quickly, in an odd sort of voice; for as he spoke he saw Hambledon coming in from the passage-door. Mrs. Myles saw him too, and guessed in an instant why Trevithic had detained her. Now in her turn she tried to hold him back.

"Do you believe in expiations, Mr. Trevithic?" said Mary, still strangely excited and beginning to tremble.

"I believe in a grateful heart, and in love and humility, and in happiness when it comes across our way," said Jack, with kind sad eyes, looking admiringly at the sweet and appealing face.

Mary was transformed. She had laid aside all her gentle pride and self-contained sadness: she looked as she must have looked long ago, when she was a girl, humble, imploring, confused; and though her looks seemed to pray him to remain, Trevithic turned away abruptly, and he went to meet Hambledon, who was coming shyly along the weedy path, a tall and prosperous-looking figure in the sunshine and desolation. "You are late," Trevithic said, with a kind, odd smile; "I had given you up." And then he left them and went into the house.

As Jack waited, talking to the housekeeper meanwhile, he had no great courage to ask himself many questions; to look behind; to realize very plainly what had happened; to picture to himself what might have been had fate willed it otherwise. He prayed an honest prayer. "Heaven bless them," he said in his heart, as he turned his steps away and left them together. He waited now patiently, walking in and out of the bare rooms, where people had once lived and waited too, who were gone with their anxious hearts, and their hopes, and their hopeless loves, and their defeats, to live in other houses and mansions which are built elsewhere. Was it all defeat for him?—not all. Had he not unconsciously wronged poor Anne, and given her just cause for resentment; and was anything too late while hope and life remained? If he could not give to his wife a heart's best love and devotion—if she herself had forbidden this—he could give her friendship, and in time the gentle ties of long use and common interest, and Dulcie's dear little arms might draw them closer together—so Jack thought in this softened mood.

John had waited a long time—pacing up and down the empty rooms.

with the faded wire bookcases for furniture, and the melancholy pegs and hooks and wooden slabs which people leave behind them in the houses they abandon : nearly an hour had passed and the two there out in the garden were talking still by the laurel-bushes. What was he waiting for ? he asked himself presently. Had they not forgotten his very existence ? There was work to be done—he had better go. What had he waited for so long ? What indeed, poor fellow ? he had been longing for a word ; one sign. He only wanted to be remembered : with that strange selfish longing which pities the poor familiar self, he longed for some word of kindness and sign of recognition from the two who had forgotten that anywhere besides in all the world there were hearts that loved or longed or forgot. John trudged away patiently as soon as he had suddenly made clear to himself that it was time to go. He knew the road well enough by this time, and cut off side turnings and came into the town—black and faded even in this brilliant sunshine that was calling the people out of their houses, opening wide windows, drying the rags of clothes, brightening the weary faces. The children clustered round the lamp-posts chattering and playing. One or two people said good-morning to him as he passed, who would have stared sulkily in a fog ; the horses in the road seemed to prick their ears, and the fly from the station, instead of crawling wearily along, actually passed him at a trot. Jack turned to look after it : a foolish likeness had struck him. It was but for an instant, and he forgot as he reached the heavy door of the workhouse.

The porter was out, and the old pauper who let Jack in began some story to which he scarcely listened. He was full of the thought of those two there in the garden—happy ! ah, how happy in each other's companionship ; while he, deserted, lonely, discontented, might scarcely own to himself, without sin, that his home was a desolate one ; that his wife was no wife, as he felt it ; that life had no such prospects of love, solace, and sympathy for him, as for some of the most forlorn of the creatures under his care. It was an ill frame of mind coming so quickly after a good one—good work done and peace-making, and a good fight won ; but the very giant he had conquered with pain and struggle, had given him the cap of knowledge, and it pressed and ached upon his brow, and set its mark there. Trevithic put up his hand to his forehead wearily, as he walked along the dull paved courts, and passed through one barred iron door after another. Most of the old folks were sunning themselves upon the benches, and the women were standing gossiping in the galleries of the house. There are stone galleries at Hammersley, from which the clothes are hung. So he came in here, opening one last iron gate to his office on the ground-floor, at the farther extremity of the great building. It was not very far from the children's wards, and on these fine mornings the little creatures, with their quaint mobcaps and straight bonnets, came scrambling down the flight of steps into the yards. The very young ones would play about a little be-peep behind an iron grating, or clinging to the skirts of one of the limp figures that were wearily lagging about the

place. But the children did not very long keep up their little baby frolics ; sad-faced little paupers in stripe blue dresses would stand staring at Trevithic—with dark eyes gleaming in such world-weighed little faces, that his kind heart ached for them. His favourite dream for them was a children's holiday. It would almost seem that they had guessed his good intentions towards them to-day : a little stream was setting in in the direction of his office, a small group stood watching not far off. It made way before him and disappeared, and then as he came near, he saw that the door was open. A little baby pauper was sitting on the flags and staring in, two other little children had crept up to the very threshold, a third had slipped its fingers into the hinge and was peeping through the chink, and then at the sound of his tired footsteps falling wearily on the pavement, there came a little cry of "Daddy, daddy!" The sweet little voice he loved best in the whole world seemed to fill the room, and Dulcie, his own little Dulcie, came to the door in the sunlight, and clasped him round the knees.

Trevithic, with these little arms to hold him safe, felt as if his complaints had been almost impious. In one minute, indeed, he had forgotten them altogether, and life still had something for him to love and to cling to. The nurse explained matters a little to the bewildered chaplain. Nothing had happened that she knew of. Mrs. Trevithic was gone to look for him. She had driven to Mrs. Myles' straight in the fly from the railway. She had left Miss Dulcie and her there to wait. She had left no message. Mrs. Trevithic had seemed put out like, said the nurse, and had made up her mind all of a sudden. They had slept in London at missis's aunt's. Trevithic was utterly bewildered.

In the meantime it was clear that something must be done for Dulcie, who was getting hungry now that her first little rapture was over (for raptures are hungry work). After some little demur, Trevithic told the girl to put on Miss Dulcie's cloak again.

While John is talking to Dulcie in his little office, Anne had driven up to the door of the rectory and crossed the threshold of her husband's house. "I want to speak to the lady and gentleman," she said to the woman who let her in. And the housekeeper pointed to the garden and told her she would find them there. Anne, the stupid commonplace woman, was shivering with passion and emotion as she passed through the empty rooms ; a few letters were lying on the chimney that John had torn open ; the window-shutter was flapping, the wood creaked under her fierce angry footsteps. There, at the end of the path under the holly, stood Mary Myles, and suddenly an angry fevered hand clutched her arm and a fierce flushed face confronted her. "Where is my husband?" hissed Anne. "You did not think that I should come. . . . How dare you take him from me?"

Colonel Hambledon, who had only gone away for a step or two, came back, hearing a voice, with Mary's glove, which she had left on the broken seat where they had been sitting. "What is this?" said he.

"Where is he?" cried the foolish, stupid woman, bursting into tears. "I knew I should find him here with her."

"He has been gone some time, poor fellow," said the Colonel, with a look of repugnance and dislike that Anne saw and never forgot. "Mrs. Trevithic, why do you think such bad thoughts?"

While Mary Myles, indignant in her turn, cried, "Oh, for shame, for shame, Anne Trevithic! You are unkind yourself, and do you dare to be jealous of others? You, who have the best and kindest husband any woman ever had." Mary, as she spoke, clung with both hands to Hambledon's arm, trembling, too, and almost crying. The Colonel, in his happiness, could hardly understand that any one else should be unhappy on such a day. While he was comforting Mary, and entreating her not to mind what that woman had said, Anne, overpowered with shame, conscience-smitten, fled away down the path and through the house—"deadly pale, like a ghost," said the housekeeper afterwards—and drove straight to the workhouse, where she had left her child. As she came to the great door, it opened with a dull sound, and her husband came out carrying little Dulcie in his arms.

"Oh, John! I have been looking for you everywhere," she said, with a little cry, as with a revulsion of feeling she ran up to him, with outstretched hands. "Where have you been? Mrs. Myles did not know, and I came back for Dulcie. We shall miss the train. Oh, where am I to go?"

Mrs. Trevithic, nervous, fluttered, bewildered, for perhaps the second time in her life, seemed scarcely to know what she was saying—she held up her cheek to be kissed, she looked about quite scared.

"What do you mean by the train, Anne?" her husband said. "Dulcie wants something to eat. Get into the carriage again."

It is difficult to believe—Trevithic himself could not understand it—Anne obeyed without a word. He asked no questions when she burst out with an incoherent, "Oh, John, they were so strange and unkind!" and then began to cry and cry and tremble from head to foot.

It was not till they got to the hotel that Mrs. Trevithic regained her usual composure, and ordered some rooms and lunch off the carte for the whole party. Trevithic never asked what had happened, though he guessed well enough, and when Hambledon told him afterwards that Mrs. Trevithic had burst in upon them in the garden it was no news to poor John.

They had finished their dinner on the ground-floor room of the quiet old inn. Little Dulcie was perched at the window watching the people as they crossed and recrossed the wire-blind. A distant church clock struck some quarters, the sound came down the street, and Trevithic pulled out his watch with a smile, saying, "I think you will be too late for your train, Anne, to-day." Anne's heart gave a throb as he spoke. She always thought people in earnest, and she looked up wistfully and tried to speak;

but the words somehow stuck in her throat. Meanwhile Trevithic jumped up in a sudden fluster. It was later than he imagined. He had his afternoon service at the workhouse to attend to. It was Friday, and he must go. He had not a moment to lose, so he told his wife in a word as he seized his hat, and set off as hard as he could go. He had not even a moment to respond to little Dulcie's signals of affection, and waves and capers behind the wire-blind.

Anne, who had been in a curious maze all this time, sitting in her place at the table and watching him, and scarcely realizing the relief of his presence as he busied himself in the old way for her comfort and Dulcie's, carving the chicken and waiting on them both, understood all at once how great the comfort of his presence had been. In her dull, sleepy way, she had been basking in sunshine for the last two hours, after the storm of the night before. She had untied her bonnet, and thrown it down upon a chair, and forgotten to smooth her sleek hair; her collar and ribbons were awry; her very face had lost its usual placidity,—it was altered and disturbed, and yet Jack thought he had never liked her looks so well, though he had never seen her so ruffled and self-forgetful in all the course of his married life.

For the moment Mrs. Trevithic was strangely happy in this odd reunion. She had almost forgotten at the instant the morning's jealousy and mad expedition—Colonel Hambledon's look of scorn and Mary Myles' words—in this new unknown happiness. It seemed to her that she had never in her life before realized what the comfort might be of some one to love, to hold, to live for. She watched the quick clever hands dispensing the food for which, to tell the truth, she had no very great appetite, though she took all that her husband gave her. Had some scales fallen from her pale wondering eyes? As he left the room she asked herself in her stupid way, what he had meant. Was this one little glimpse of home the last that she would ever know? was it all over, all over? Anne tied her bonnet on again, and telling the maid to take care of little Dulcie, went out into the street again and walked off in the direction of the chapel. She had a sudden wish to be there. She did not know that they would admit her; but no difficulties were made, and she passed under the big arch. Some one pointed out the way, and she pushed open a green-baize door and went in; and so Anne knelt in the bare little temple where the paupers' prayers were offered up—humble prayers and whitewash that answer their purpose as well perhaps as Gothic, and iron castings, and flamboyant windows, and the beautiful clear notes of the choristers answering each other and bursting into triumphal utterance. The paupers were praying for their daily bread, hard, and dry, and butterless; for forgiveness for trespasses grosser and blacker perhaps than ours; for deliverance from evil of which Anne and others besides never realized; and ending with words of praise and adoration which we all use in truth, but which mean far, far more when uttered from that darkness upon

which the divine light beams most splendidly. Anne for the first time in her life was kneeling a pauper in spirit, ashamed and touched, and repentant.

There was no sermon, and Mrs. Trevithic got up from her knees and came away with her fellow-petitioners and waited in the courtyard for John. The afternoon sun of this long eventful day was shining on the stones and casting the shadows of the bars and bolts, and brightening sad faces of the old men and women, and the happy faces of two people who had also attended the service, and who now advanced arm-in-arm to where Anne was standing. She started back as she first saw them: they had been behind her in the chapel, and she had not known that they were there.

The sight of the two had brought back with it all the old feeling of hatred, and shame, and mistrust; all the good that was in her seemed to shrink and shrivel away for an instant at their approach, and at the same time came a pang of envious longing. They seemed so happy together; so *one*, as, with a glance at one another, they both came forward. Was she all alone when others were happy? had she not of her own doing put her husband away from her, and only come to him to reproach and leave him again? For a woman of such obstinacy and limited perception as Mrs. Trevithic to have settled that a thing was to be, was reason enough for it to happen; only a longing, passionate longing, came, that it might be otherwise than she had settled; that she might be allowed to stay—and a rush of the better feelings that had overcome her of late kept her there waiting to speak to these two who had scorned her.

"I want to ask you to forgive me," said Mary, blushing, "anything I may have said. Your husband has done us both such service, that I can't help asking you for his sake to forget my hastiness."

"You see we were taken aback," said the Colonel, not unkindly. "Shake hands, please, Mrs. Trevithic, in token that you forgive us, and wish us joy. I assure you we are heartily sorry if we pained you." Anne flushed and flushed and didn't speak, but put out her hand,—not without an effort. "Are you going back directly, or are you going to stay with your husband?" said the Colonel, shaking her heartily by the hand.

Poor Anne looked up, scared, and shrank back once more,—she could not bear to tell them that she did not know. She turned away all hurt and frightened, looking about for some means of escape, and then at that moment she saw that John was coming up to them across the yard from the office where he had gone to leave his surplice. "Oh, John," she said, still bewildered, and going to meet him, and with a piteous face, "here are Colonel Hambleton and Mary."

"We have come to ask for your congratulations," the Colonel said, laughing and looking very happy; "and to tell you that your match-making has been successful."

Mary Myles did not speak, but put out her hand to Trevithic.

Mrs. Trevithic meanwhile stood waiting her sentence. How new the old accustomed situations seem as they occur again and again in the course of our lives. Waters of sorrow overwhelm in their depths, as do the clear streams of tranquil happiness, both rising from distant sources, and flowing on either side of our paths. As I have said, the sight of these two, in their confidence and sympathy, filled poor Anne's heart with a longing that she had never known before. Mary Myles, I think, guessed what was passing in the other's mind—women feel one another's passing emotions—but the good Colonel was utterly unconscious.

"We have been asking your wife if she remains with you, or if she is going back directly," said he. "I thought perhaps you would both come to dine with us before we go."

There was a mist before Anne's eyes, an unspoken peace in her heart, as Jack drew her hand through his arm, and said, in his kind voice, "Of course she stays; I am not going to let my belongings go away again, now that I have got them here."

As they were walking back to the inn together, Anne told her husband of her morning's work, and John sighed as he listened.

"We have both something to forgive," he said once more, looking at her with his kind speaking eyes.

Anne winced and looked away, and then her heart turned again, and she spoke and said, with real sensibility,—

"I have nothing to forgive, John. I thought you were in the wrong, but it was I from the beginning."

After a little time Trevithic and Anne and Dulcie went to live together in the old house in Bolton Fields. The woman was humbled, and did her best to make her husband's home happy, and John too remembered the past, and loved his wife, with all her faults, and did not ask too much of her, and kept clear, as best he could, of possible struggles and difficulties. His life was hard, but blows and fatigue he did not grudge, so long as he could help to deliver the land. Foul caverns were cleansed, ignorant monsters were routed, dark things were made light. He was not content in his parish to drive away evil; he tried his best and strove to change it, and make it into good. These tangible dragons and giants were hard to fight, but once attacked they generally succumbed in the end, and lost perhaps one head, or a claw in each successive encounter, and then other champions rose up, and by degrees the monster began to fall and dwindle away. But poor Trevithic's work is not over. Another giant is coming to meet him through the darkness. He is no hideous monster of evil like the rest; his face is pitiless, but his eyes are clear and calm. His still voice says, "Hold," and then it swells by degrees, and deafens all other sound. "I am a spirit of truth, men call me evil because I come out of the darkness," the giant cries; "but see my works are.

good as well as bad ! See what bigotry, what narrow prejudice, what cruelty and wickedness and intolerance I have attacked and put to rout." . In the story-book it is Jack who is the conqueror ; he saws through the bridge by which the giant approaches, and the giant falls into the moat and is drowned. But, as far as I can see, the Jacks of this day would rather make a way for him than shut him out ; some of the heroes who have tried to saw away the bridge have fallen into the moat with their enemy, and others are making but a weak defence, and in their hearts would be glad to admit him into the palace of the King.

Mrs. Trevithic rarely goes into the garden at the back of her house. The other day, being vexed with her husband about some trifling matter, she followed him out to remonstrate. He was standing with Dulcie by the prickly holly-tree that she remembered so well, and seeing her coming he put out his hand with a smile. The words of reproach died away on Anno's lips, and two bright spots came into her cheeks, as with a very rare display of feeling she suddenly stooped and kissed the hand that held hers.

As I finish the story of Jack Trevithic, which, from the play in which it began, has turned to earnest, H. looks up from her knitting, and says that it is very unsatisfactory, and that she is getting tired of calling everything by a different name ; and she thinks she would like to go back to the realities of life again. In my dream-world they have been forgotten, for the fire is nearly out and the grey mist is spreading along the streets. It is too dark to write any more—an organ is playing a dismal tune, a carriage is rolling over the stones ; so I ring the bell for the lamp and the coals, and Susan comes in to shut the shutters.

Anarchy and Authority.

I SPOKE lately of Culture, and tried to show that it was, or ought to be, the study and pursuit of perfection ; and that of perfection, as pursued by culture, beauty and intelligence, or, in other words, sweetness and light, were the main characters. But from special reasons springing out of the occasion on which I spoke, I insisted chiefly on beauty, or sweetness, as a character of perfection. To complete rightly my design, it evidently remains to speak also of intelligence, or light, as a character of perfection ; and this I had always the intention, at some convenient time, to do. Meanwhile, both here and on the other side of the Atlantic, all sorts of objections have been raised against the "religion of culture," as the objectors mockingly call it, which I am supposed to be promulgating. It is said to be a religion proposing parmaceti, or some scented salve or other, as a cure for human miseries ; a religion breathing a spirit of cultivated inaction, making its believer refuse to lend a hand at uprooting the definite evils on all sides of us, and filling him with antipathy against the reforms and reformers which try to extirpate them. In general, it is summed up as being not practical, or—as some critics more familiarly put it—all moonshine. That Alcibiades, the editor of the *Morning Star*, taunts me, as its promulgator, with living out of the world and knowing nothing of life and men. That great austere toiler, the editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, upbraids me, but kindly, and more in sorrow than in anger, for trifling with aesthetics and poetical fancies, while he himself, in that arsenal of his in Fleet Street, is bearing the burden and heat of the day. An intelligent American newspaper, the *Nation*, says that it is very easy to sit in one's study and find fault with the course of modern society, but the thing is to propose practical improvements for it ; while Mr. Frederic Harrison, in a very good-tempered and witty rejoinder, which makes me quite understand his having apparently achieved such a conquest of my young Prussian friend, Arminius, at last gets moved to an almost stern moral impatience, to behold, as he says, "Death, sin, cruelty stalk among us, filling their maws with innocence and youth," and me, in the midst of the general tribulation, handing out my pouncet-box.

It is impossible that all these remonstrances and reproofs should not affect me, and I shall try my very best, in completing my design and in speaking of light as one of the characters of perfection, and of culture as giving us light, to profit by the objections I have heard and read, and to drive at practice as much as I can, by showing the communications and passages into practical life from the doctrine which I am inculcating. .

But just one word, first, of self-defence to Mr. Frederic Harrison and the Comtist body generally, as to my alleged misrepresentations of their revered master. A distinction is to be drawn, in what I said about the Comtist doctrine and Jacobinism, between what applies to the Rabbi, as I called him, or master, and what applies to his English disciples. This distinction the disciples will have no difficulty at all in drawing for themselves, if they will turn again to what I have said, and will read my words without changing them. For instance, I never said that Comte was "full of furious indignation with the past;" and his followers are welcome to say, if they like, that Comte "loves and takes counsel of the past, discards all violent for moral agencies of progress, and thus exactly contrasts with Jacobinism." But when I talked of "violent indignation with the past" and the "ways of Jacobinism," I was speaking of the English disciples of Comte, of some of their recent manifestoes, and of their way of preaching the gospel of their master. For example, in that very same powerful manifesto in which Mr. Frederic Harrison criticized culture, he spoke of "every hopeful movement being met with the shriek of superstition;" he spoke of the "bigotry of priests and sectaries;" he spoke of the "ancient iniquities unabated;" he spoke of the "men who care for public good wearied out or hunted down;" he spoke of "the 658 well-bred gentlemen of the House of Commons duping the people, degrading their political tone, stifling public activity, zealous for little but their personal ambitions and class privileges." And then he turned to the working-class and said:—"Here are the brightest powers of sympathy and the readiest powers of action!" Now no one admires this vigorous language, as language, more than I do; but I think it breathes "violent indignation with the past." I cannot admit that it is the language of one "living and taking counsel of the past, discarding all violent for moral agencies of progress;" or that it "exactly contrasts with Jacobinism." On the contrary, it seems to me to be exactly Jacobinical language, as I called it. Granted that Comte himself had even a "preposterous veneration for the past," then the English Comtist should be grateful to me for recalling him to the benevolent ways of his master.

And, perhaps, if I am to be driven to confess it, it was my very regard for Mr. Frederic Harrison's talents, and my solicitude for his future career, which made me give the English Comtists this sort of caution. No one knows better than he does that in the book of the master (Congreve's translation, authorized version), it is written:—"Every servile or seditious priest who aims at temporal power by flattering the patriciate or the proletariat will be absolutely banished from the priesthood." Why am I to be compelled to publish my own good feelings, and to avow that when I read Mr. Frederic Harrison's strictures on *Our Venetian Constitution*, the idea rushed into my mind of some enemy, or rival, bringing up against him this text from the sacred volume, and charging him with flattering, not certainly the patriciate, but the proletariat? I figured to myself the odious accusation successful, the youthful Religion

of Humanity robbed of one of its choicest ministers, and Mr. Frederic Harrison deprived of that promotion in the Comtist hierarchy to which, I am sure, his zeal and his abilities abundantly entitle him.

So far as to the English disciples of Comte; now as to Comte himself. What I said about violence applied to the English Comtists and their recent language—language which they themselves, as they grow in the doctrine of their good master, will no doubt learn to deplore. But where I touched upon the doctrine itself, and on Comte, was in speaking of “abstract systems of renovation applied wholesale—a new doctrine drawn up in black and white, for elaborating down to the very smallest details a rational society for the future.” Not a word here as to *violence* or *violent revolutions*; only a charge of system-mongering and machinery-mongering on an excessive scale. What I had in my mind was such things as Comte dating a prefaco the 15th of Dante, 66th year of the Comtian era, instead of the 30th of July, 1854; dating an appendix the 22nd of Moses, a circular the 27th of Aristotle. It was such things as his “System of Sociolatry, embracing in a series of eighty-one annual Festivals the Worship of Humanity under all its aspects,” in which the 1st of January that we are now approaching—for old-fashioned Christians the Circumcision, and for the multitude New Year’s Day—becomes the “Synthetical Festival of the Great Being.” It was such things as the hierarchy declared in the sacred volume by the Priest in answer to that important appeal of the Woman:—“This leads me naturally, my father, to ask you to end this general survey by pointing out the actual constitution of the Positive Priesthood;”—the philosophical presbyteries then announced by the Priest, the four national superiors for the Italian, the Spanish, the English, and the German Churches, and the High Priest of Humanity, “whose natural residence will be Paris, as the Metropolis of the Regenerated West.” This, and a multitude of other things like this, was present to my mind when I talked of “abstract systems of renovation, and of elaborating down to the very smallest details a rational society for the future.” Granted that Comte did not, like the Jacobins, “seek *violent revolutions*,” still this “Synthetical Festival of the Great Being,” these reformed months and years, are so much in their style, that I cannot allow that he “exactly contrasts with Jacobinism;” and I should even be inclined, regarding him on this side, to call him Jacobinical. So much machinery is not to my taste, who am, as I have said, plain and unsystematic, and who am not inclined to have given up worshipping on Mount Gerizim or Mount Moriah, merely to find myself worshipping in the Rue Monsieur le Prince and the Metropolis of the Regenerated West instead. And to my countrymen, with their fatal weakness for machinery, their bent for attaching themselves to this, and losing all sense, while they so attach themselves, of the spirit and truth of things, everything excessive in the way of machinery, all that gives them a chance of forgetting the principal in the accessory, the end in the means, is particularly dangerous. As they have been capable of thinking that vital religion was concerned with keeping the Crystal Palace shut on

Sunday, or of thinking that it was concerned in exploding (through the instrumentality, humanly speaking, of Dr. Colenso) the fallacy of the 88 pigeons, so they are capable of setting an exaggerated value upon what, in the Comtist faith, is formal and ceremonial. Over such a result of "the systematization of ideas conducting" (to use the language of the master) "to the systematization of sentiments" a people of our peculiar temperament, every good Comtist would grieve; so that, here again, the votaries of the new religion have not only no ground for complaining of my misrepresentations, but have in truth, if they will consider the thing dispassionately, more reason to be pleased with me than to be annoyed.

And now, having quite, I hope, cleared away all shadow of misunderstanding between me and the young and powerful school of Comte's disciples in this country, I pass to my proper subject. I want to investigate the function of culture in giving us light, and in doing so to find, as far as possible, a practical side to this function.

It is said that a man with my theories of sweetness and light is full of antipathy against the rougher or coarser movements going on around him, that he will not lend a hand to the humble operation of uprooting evil by their means, and that therefore the believers in action grow impatient with him. But what if rough and coarse action, ill-calculated action, action with insufficient light, is, and has for a long time been, our bane? What if our urgent want now is, not to act at any price, but rather to lay in a stock of light for our difficulties? In that case, to refuse to lend a hand to the rougher and coarser movements going on round us, to make the primary need, both for oneself and others, to consist in enlightening ourselves and qualifying ourselves to act less at random, is surely the best, and in real truth the most practical line, our endeavours can take. So that if I can show what my opponents call rough or coarse action, but what I would rather call random and ill-regulated action—action with insufficient light, action pursued because we like to be doing something and doing it as we please, and do not like the trouble of thinking, and the severe constraint of any kind of rule—if I can show this to be, at the present moment, a practical mischief and danger to us, then I have found a practical use for light in correcting this state of things, and have only to exemplify how, in cases which fall under everybody's observation, it may deal with it.

When last I spoke of culture, I insisted on our bondage to machinery, on our proneness to value machinery as an end in itself, without looking beyond it to the end for which alone, in truth, it is valuable. Freedom, I said, was one of those things which we thus worshipped in itself, without enough regarding the ends for which freedom is to be desired. In our common notions and talk about freedom, we eminently show our idoltry of machinery. Our prevalent notion is—and I quoted a number of instances to prove it—that it is a most happy and important thing for a man merely to be able to do as he likes. On what he is to do when he is thus

free to do as he likes, we do not lay so much stress. Our familiar praise of the British Constitution under which we live, is that it is a system of checks—a system which stops and paralyses any power in interfering with the free action of individuals. To this effect Mr. Bright, who loves to walk in the old ways of the Constitution, said forcibly in one of his great speeches, what many other people are every day saying less forcibly, that the central idea of English life and politics is *the assertion of personal liberty*. Evidently this is so; but evidently, also, as feudalism, which with its ideas and habits of subordination was for many centuries silently behind the British Constitution, dies out, and we are left with nothing but our system of checks, and our notion of its being the great right and happiness of an Englishman to do as far as possible what he likes, we are in danger of drifting towards anarchy. We have not the notion, so familiar on the Continent and to antiquity, of *the State*—the nation in its collective and corporate character, entrusted with stringent powers for the general advantage, and controlling individual wills in the name of an interest wider than that of individuals. We say, what is very true, that this notion is often made instrumental to tyranny; we say that a State is in reality made up of those individuals who compose it, and that every individual is the best judge of his own interests. Our leading class is an aristocracy, and no aristocracy likes the notion of a State-authority greater than itself, with a stringent administrative machinery superseding the decorative inutilities of lord-lieutenancy, deputy-heutonancy, and the *posse comitatus*, which are all in its own hands. Our middle-class, the great representative of trade and dissent, with its maxims of every man for himself in business, every man for himself in religion, dreads a powerful administration which might somehow interfere with it; and besides, it has its own decorative inutilities of vestrymanship and guardianship, which are to this class what lord-lieutenancy and the county magistracy are to the aristocratic class, and a stringent administration might either take these functions out of its hands, or prevent its exercising them in its own comfortable, independent manner, as at present.

Then as to our working-class. This class, pressed constantly by the hard daily compulsion of material wants, is naturally the very centre and stronghold of our national idea, that it is man's ideal right and felicity to do as he likes. I think I have somewhere related how Monsieur Michelet said to me of the people of France, that it was "a nation of barbarians civilized by the conscription." He meant that through their military service the idea of public duty and of discipline was brought to the mind of these masses, in other respects so raw and uncultivated. Our masses are quite as raw and uncultivated as the French; and, so far from their having the idea of public duty and of discipline, superior to the individual's self-will, brought to their mind by a universal obligation of military service, such as that of the conscription—so far from their having this, the very idea of a conscription is so at variance with our English notion of the prime right and blessedness of doing as one likes,

that I remember the manager of the Clay Cross works in Derbyshire told me during the Crimean war, when our want of soldiers was much felt and some people were talking of a conscription, that sooner than submit to a conscription the population of that district would flee to the mines, and lead a sort of Robin Hood life under ground.

For a long time, as I have said, the strong feudal habits of subordination and deference continued to tell upon this class. The modern spirit has now almost entirely dissolved those habits, and the anarchical tendency of our worship of freedom in and for itself, of our superstitious faith, as I say, in machinery, is becoming very manifest. More and more, because of this our blind faith in machinery, because of our want of light to enable us to look beyond machinery to the end for which machinery is valuable, this and that man, and this and that body of men, all over the country, are beginning to assert and put in practice an Englishman's right to do what he likes ; his right to march where he likes, meet where he likes, enter where he likes, hoot as he likes, threaten as he likes, smash as he likes. All this, I say, tends to anarchy ; and though a number of excellent people, and particularly my friends of the liberal or progressive party, as they call themselves, are kind enough to reassure us by saying that these are trifles, that a few transient outbreaks of rowdyism signify nothing, that our system of liberty is one which itself cures all the evils which it works, that the educated and intelligent classes are in overwhelming strength and majestic repose, ready, like our military force in riots, to act at a moment's notice—yet one finds that one's liberal friends generally say this because they have such faith in themselves and their nostrums, when they shall return, as the public welfare requires, to place and power. But this faith of theirs one cannot exactly share, when one has so long had them and their nostrums at work, and sees that they have not prevented our coming to our present embarrassed condition ; and one finds, also, that the outbreaks of rowdyism tend to become less and less trifles, to become more frequent rather than less frequent ; and that meanwhile our educated and intelligent classes remain in their majestic repose, and that somehow or other, whatever happens, their overwhelming strength, like our military force in riots, never does act.

How, indeed, should their overwhelming strength act, when the man who gives an inflammatory lecture, or breaks down the Park railings, or invades a Secretary of State's office, is only following an Englishman's impulse to do as he likes ; and our own conscience tells us that we ourselves have always regarded this impulse as something primary and sacred ? Mr. Murphy lectures at Birmingham, and showers on the Catholic population of that town "wrds," says Mr. Hardy, "only fit to be addressed to thieves or murderers." What then ? Mr. Murphy has his own reasons of several kinds. He suspects the Roman Catholic Church of designs upon Mrs. Murphy ; and he says, if mayors and magistrates do not care for their wives and daughters, he does ! But, above all, he is doing as he likes, or;

in worthier language, asserting his personal liberty. "I will carry out my lectures if they walk over my body as a dead corpse ; and I say to the Mayor of Birmingham that he is my servant while I am in Birmingham, and as my servant he must do his duty and protect me." Touching and beautiful words, which find a sympathetic chord in every British bosom ! The moment it is plainly put before us that a man is asserting his personal liberty, we are half disarmed ; because we are believers in freedom, and not in some dream of a right reason to which the assertion of our freedom is to be subordinated. Accordingly, the Secretary of State had to say that although the lecturer's language was "only fit to be addressed to thieves or murderers," yet "I do not think he is to be deprived—I do not think that anything I have said could justify the inference that he is to be deprived—of the right of protection in a place built by him for the purpose of these lectures ; because the language was not language which afforded grounds for a criminal prosecution." No, nor to be silenced by Mayor, or Home Secretary, or any administrative authority on earth, simply on their notion of what is discreet and reasonable. This is in perfect consonance with our public opinion, and with our national love for the assertion of personal liberty.

In quite another department of affairs, Sir William Page Wood relates an incident which is just to the same effect as this of Mr. Murphy. A testator bequeathed 800*l.* a year, to be for ever applied as a pension to some person who had been unsuccessful in literature, and whose duty should be to support and diffuse, by his writings, the testator's own views, as enforced in the testator's publications. This bequest was appealed against in the Court of Chancery, on the ground of its absurdity ; but, being only absurd, it was upheld, and the so-called charity was established. Having, I say, at the bottom of our English hearts a very strong belief in freedom, and a very weak belief in right reason, we are soon silenced when a man pleads the prime right to do as he likes, because this is the prime right for ourselves too ; and even if we attempt now and then to mumble something about reason, yet we have thought so little about this and so much about liberty, that we are in conscience forced, when our brother Philistine with whom we are meddling turns boldly round upon us and asks : *Have you any light ?* to shake our heads ruefully, and to let him go his own way after all.

There are many things to be said on behalf of this exclusive attention of ours to liberty, and of the relaxed habits of government which it has engendered. It is very easy to mistake or to exaggerate the sort of anarchy from which we are in danger through them. We are not in danger from Fenianism, fierce and turbulent as it may show itself ; for against this our conscience is free enough to let us act resolutely and put forth our overwhelming strength the moment there is any real need for it. In the first place, it never was any part of our creed that the great right and blessedness of an Irishman, or, indeed, of anybody on earth except an Englishman, is to do as he likes ; and we can have no scruple at all about abridging,

if necessary, a non-Englishman's assertion of personal liberty. The British Constitution, its checks, and its prime virtues, are for Englishmen. We may extend them to others out of love and kindness; but we find no real divine law written on our hearts constraining us so to extend them. And then the difference between an Irish Fenian and an English rough is so immense, and the case, in dealing with the Fenian, so much more clear! He is so evidently desperate and dangerous, a man of a conquered race, a Papist, with centuries of ill-usage to inflame him against us, with an alien religion established in his country by us at his expense, with no admiration of our institutions, no love of our virtues, no talents for our business, no turn for our comfort! Show him our symbolical Truss Manufactory on the finest site in Europe, and tell him that British industrialism and individualism can bring a man to that, and he remains cold. Evidently, if we deal tenderly with a sentimentalist like this, it is out of pure philanthropy. But with the Hyde Park rioter how different! He is our own flesh and blood; he is a Protestant; he is framed by nature to do as we do, hate what we hate, love what we love; he is capable of feeling the symbolical force of the Truss Manufactory; the question of questions, for him, is a wages' question. That beautiful sentence Sir Daniel Gooch quoted to the Swindon workmen, and which I treasure as Mrs. Gooch's Golden Rule—or the Divine Injunction "Be ye Perfect" done into British—the sentence Sir Daniel Gooch's mother repeated to him every morning when he was a boy going to work: "*Ever remember, my dear Dan, that you should look forward to being some day manager of that concern*"—this fruitful maxim is perfectly fitted to shine forth in the heart of the Hyde Park rough also, and to be his guiding-star through life. He has no visionary schemes of revolution and transformation, though of course he would like his class to rule, as the aristocratic class like theirs to rule, and the middle class theirs. Meanwhile, our social machine is a little out of order; there are a good many people in our paradisiacal centres of industrialism and individualism taking the bread out of one another's mouths; the rioter has not yet quite found his groove and settled down to his work, and so he is just asserting his personal liberty a little, going where he likes, assembling where he likes, bawling as he likes, hustling as he likes. Just as the rest of us—as the country squires in the aristocratic class, as the political dissenters in the middle-class—he has no idea of a *State*, of the nation in its collective and corporate character controlling, as government, the free swing of this or that one of its members in the name of the higher reason of all of them, his own as well as that of others. He sees the rich, the aristocratic class, in occupation of the executive government, and if he is stopped from making Hyde Park a bear-garden or the streets impasseable, he says he is being butchered by the aristocracy.

His apparition is embarrassing, because too many cooks spoil the broth; because, while the aristocratic and middle classes have long been doing as they like with great vigour, he has been too undeveloped and

submissive to join in the game ; and now, when he comes, he comes in immense numbers, and is rather raw and rough. But he does not break many laws, or not many at one time ; and, as our laws were made for very different circumstances from our present (but always with an eye to Englishmen doing as they like), and as the clear letter of the law must be against our Englishman who does as he likes and not only the spirit of the law and public policy, and as Government must neither have any discretionary power nor act resolutely on its own interpretation of the law if any one disputes it, it is evident our laws give our playful giant, in doing as he likes, considerable advantage. Besides, even if he can be clearly proved to commit an illegality in doing as he likes, there is always the resource of not putting the law in force, or of abolishing it. So he has his way, and if he has his way, he is soon satisfied for the time ; however, he falls into the habit of taking it oftener and oftener, and at last begins to create by his operations a confusion of which mischievous people may take advantage, and which at any rate, by troubling the common course of business throughout the country, tends to cause distress, and so to increase the sort of anarchy and social disintegration which had previously commenced. And thus that profound sense of settled order and security, without which a society like ours cannot live and grow at all, is beginning to threaten us with taking its departure.

Now, if culture, which simply means trying to perfect oneself, and one's mind as part of oneself, brings us light, and if light shows us that there is nothing so very blessed in merely doing as one likes, that the worship of the mere freedom to do as one likes is worship of machinery, that the really blessed thing is to like what right reason ordains, and to follow her authority, then we have got a practical benefit out of culture. We have got a much wanted principle, a principle of authority, to counteract the tendency to anarchy which seems to be threatening us.

But how to organize this authority, or to what hands to entrust the wielding of it ? How to get your *State*, summing up the right reason of the community, and giving effect to it, as circumstances may require, with vigour ? And here I think I see my enemies waiting for me with a hungry joy in their eyes. But I shall elude them.

The *State*, the power most representing the right reason of the nation, and most worthy, therefore, of ruling—of exercising, when circumstances require it, authority over us all—is for Mr. Carlyle the aristocracy. For Mr. Lowe, it is the middle-class with its incomparable Parliament. For the Reform League, it is the working-class, with its “brightest powers of sympathy and readiest powers of action.” Now, culture, simply trying to see things as they are, in order to seize on the best and to make it prevail, is surely well fitted to help us to judge rightly, by all the aids of observing, reading, and thinking, these three candidates for authority, and can thus render us a practical service of no mean value.

So when Mr. Carlyle, a man of genius to whom we have all at one time or other been indebted for refreshment and stimulus, says we should

give rule to the aristocracy, mainly because of its dignity and politeness, surely culture is useful in reminding us, that in our idea of perfection the characters of beauty and intelligence are both of them present, and sweetness and light, the two noblest of things, are united. Allowing, therefore, with Mr. Carlyle, the aristocratic class to possess sweetness, culture insists on the necessity of light also, and shows us that aristocracies being, by the very nature of things, inaccessible to ideas, unapt to see how the world is going, must be wanting in light, and must therefore be, at a moment when light is our great requisite, helpless. Aristocracies, those children of the established fact, are for epochs of concentration; in epochs of expansion, epochs such as that in which we now live, epochs when always the warning voice is again heard: *Now is the judgment of this world*—in such epochs aristocracies, with their natural clinging to the established fact, their want of sense for the flux of things, for the inevitable transitoriness of all human institutions, are bewildered and helpless. Their serenity, their high spirit, their power of haughty resistance—the great qualities of an aristocracy, and the secret of its distinguished manners and dignity—these very qualities, in an epoch of expansion, turn against their possessors. Again and again I have said how the refinement of an aristocracy may be precious and educative to a raw nation as a kind of shadow of true refinement; how its serenity and dignified freedom from petty cares may serve as a useful foil to set off the vulgarity and hideousness in the type of life which a hard middle-class tends to establish, and to help people to see this vulgarity and hideousness in their true colours. From such an ignoble spectacle as that of poor Mrs. Lincoln—a spectacle to vulgarize a whole nation—aristocracies undoubtedly preserve us. But the true grace and serenity is that of which Greece and Greek art suggest the admirable ideals of perfection—a serenity which comes from having made order among ideas and harmonized them; whereas the serenity of aristocracies, at least the peculiar serenity of aristocracies of Teutonic origin, appears to come from their never having had any ideas to trouble them. And so, in a time of expansion like the present, a time for ideas, one gets, perhaps, in regarding an aristocracy, even more than the idea of serenity, the idea of futility and sterility. I have often wondered whether upon the whole earth there is anything so unintelligent, so unapt to perceive how the world is really going, as an ordinary young Englishman of our upper class. Ideas he has not, and neither has he that seriousness of our middle-class which is, as I have often said, the great strength of this class, and may become its salvation. Why, you will hear a young Dives of the aristocratic class, when the whim takes him to sing the praises of wealth and material comfort, sing them with a cynicism from which the conscience of the veriest Philistine of our industrial middle-class would recoil in affright. And when, with the natural sympathy of aristocracies for firm dealing with the multitude, and his uneasiness at our feeble dealing with it at home, an unvarnished young Englishman of our

aristocratic class applauds the absolute rulers on the Continent, he manages completely to miss the grounds of reason and intelligence which alone can give any colour of justification, any possibility of existence, to those rulers, and applauds them on grounds which it would make their own hair stand on end to listen to.

And all this while we are in an epoch of expansion; and the essence of an epoch of expansion is a movement of ideas, and the one salvation of an epoch of expansion is a harmony of ideas. The very principle of the authority which we are seeking as a defence against anarchy is right reason, ideas, light. The more, therefore, an aristocracy calls to its aid its innate forces—its impenetrability, its high spirit, its power of haughty resistance—to deal with an epoch of expansion, the graver is the danger, the greater the certainty of explosion, the surer the aristocracy's defeat; for it is trying to do violence to nature instead of working along with it. The best powers shown by the best men of an aristocracy at such an epoch are, it will be observed, non-aristocratical powers, powers of industry, powers of intelligence; and these powers, thus exhibited, tend really not to strengthen the aristocracy, but to take their owners out of it, to expose them to the dissolving agencies of thought and change, to make them men of the modern spirit and of the future. If, as sometimes happens, they add to their non-aristocratical qualities of labour and thought, a strong dose of aristocratical qualities also—of pride, defiance turn for resistance—this truly aristocratical side of them, so far from adding any strength to them, really neutralizes their force and makes them impracticable and ineffective.

Knowing myself to be sadly to seek, as Mr. Frederic Harrison says, in "a philosophy with coherent, interdependent, subordinate and derivative principles," I continually have recourse to a plain man's expedient of trying to make what few simple notions I have, clearer and more intelligible to myself by means of example and illustration. And having been brought up at Oxford in the bad old times, when we were stuffed with Greek and Aristotle, and thought nothing of preparing ourselves—as after Mr. Lowe's recent great speech we shall do—to fight the battle of life with the German waiters, my head is still full of a lumber of phrases we learnt at Oxford from Aristotle, about virtue being in a mean, and about excess and defect, and so on. Once when I had had the advantage of listening to the Reform debates in the House of Commons, having heard a number of interesting speakers, and among them Lord Elcho and Sir Thomas Bateson, I remember it struck me, applying Aristotle's machinery of the mean to my ideas about our aristocracy, that Lord Elcho was exactly the perfection, or happy mean, or virtue, of aristocracy, and Sir Thomas Bateson the excess; and I fancied that by observing these two we might see both the inadequacy of aristocracy to supply the principle of authority needful for our present wants, and the danger of its trying to supply it when it was not really competent for the business. On the one hand, in Lord Elcho, showing plenty of high spirit, but remarkable, far above and beyond his gift

of high spirit, for the fine tempering of his high spirit, for ease, serenity, politeness—the great virtues, as Mr. Carlyle says, of aristocracy; in this beautiful and virtuous mean, there seemed evidently some insufficiency of light; while, on the other hand, Sir Thomas Bateson, in whom the high spirit of aristocracy, its impenetrability, defiant courage, and pride of resistance, were developed even in excess, was manifestly capable, if he had his way given him, of causing us great danger, and, indeed, of throwing the whole commonwealth into confusion. Then I reverted to that old fundamental notion of mine about the grand merit of our race being really our honesty; and the very helplessness of our aristocratic or governing class in dealing with our perturbed social state gave me a sort of pride and satisfaction, because I saw they were, as a whole, too honest to try and manage a business for which they did not feel themselves capable.

Surely, now, it is no inconsiderable boon culture confers upon us, if in embarrassed times like the present it enables us to look at the ins and the outs of things in this way, without hatred and without partiality, and with a disposition to see the good in everybody all round. And I try to follow just the same course with our middle-class as with our aristocracy. Mr. Lowe talks to us of this strong middle part of the nation, of the unrivalled deeds of our liberal middle-class Parliament, of the noble, the heroic work it has performed in the last thirty years; and I begin to ask myself if we shall not, then, find in our middle class the principle of authority we want, and if we had not better take administration as well as legislation away from the weak extreme which now administers for us, and commit both to the strong middle part. I observe, too, that the heroes of middle-class liberalism, such as we have hitherto known it, speak with a kind of prophetic anticipation of the great destiny which awaits them, and as if the future was clearly theirs. The advanced party, the progressive party, the party in alliance with the future, are the names they like to give themselves. "The principles which will obtain recognition in the future," says Mr. Miall, a personage of deserved eminence among the political Dissenters, as they are called, who have been the backbone of middle-class liberalism—"the principles which will obtain recognition in the future are the principles for which I have long and zealously laboured. I qualified myself for joining in the work of harvest by doing to the best of my ability the duties of seed-time." These duties, if one is to gather them from the works of the great liberal party in the last thirty years, are, as I have elsewhere summed them up, the advocacy of free-trade, of parliamentary reform, of abolition of church-rates, of voluntaryism in religion and education, of non-interference of the State between employers and employed, and of marriage with one's deceased wife's sister.

I know, when I object that all this is machinery, the great liberal middle-class has now grown cunning enough to answer, that it always meant more by these things than meets the eye; that it has had that within which passes show, and that we are soon going to see, in a Free Church and all manner of good things, what it was. But I have learned from

Bishop Wilson (if Mr. Frederic Harrison will forgive my again quoting that poor old hierophant of a decayed superstition) : " If we would really know our heart let us impartially view our actions ; " and I cannot help thinking that if our liberals had had so much sweetness and light in their inner minds as they allege, more of it must have come out in their sayings and doings. An American friend of the English liberals says, indeed, that their dissidence of dissent has been a mere instrument of the political Dissenters for making reason and the will of God prevail (and no doubt he would say the same of marriage with one's deceased wife's sister) ; and that the abolition of a State Church is merely the Dissenter's means to this end, just as culture is mine. Another American defender of theirs says just the same of their industrialism and free-trade ; indeed, this gentleman, taking the bull by the horns, proposes that we should for the future call industrialism culture, and the industrialists the men of culture, and then of course there can be no longer any misapprehension about their true character ; and besides the pleasure of being wealthy and comfortable, they will have authentic recognition as vessels of sweetness and light. All this is undoubtedly specious ; but I must remark that the culture of which I talked was an endeavour to come at reason and the will of God by means of reading, observing, and thinking ; and that whoever calls anything else culture, may, indeed, call it so if he likes, but then he talks of something quite different from what I talked of. And, again, as culture's way of working for reason and the will of God is by directly trying to know more about them, while the dissidence of dissent is evidently in itself no effort of this kind, nor is its Free Church, in fact, a church with worthier conceptions of God and the ordering of the world than the State Church professes, but with mainly the same conceptions of these as the State Church has, only that every man is to comport himself as he likes in professing them—this being so, I cannot at once accept the Nonconformity any more than the industrialism and the other great works of our liberal middle-class as proof positive that this class is in possession of light, and that here is the true seat of authority for which we are in search ; but I must try a little further, and seek for other indications which may enable me to make up my mind.

Why should we not do with the middle-class as we have done with the aristocratic class—find in it some representative men who may stand for the virtuous mean of this class, for the perfection of its present qualities and mode of being, and also for the excess of them. Such men must clearly not be men of genius like Mr. Bright ; for, as I have formerly said, so far as a man has genius he tends to take himself out of the category of class altogether, and to become simply a man. Mr. Bright's brother, Mr. Jacob Bright, would, perhaps, be more to the purpose ; he seems to sum up very well in himself, without disturbing influences, the general liberal force of the middle-class, the force by which it has done its great works of free-trade, parliamentary reform, voluntaryism, and so on, and the spirit in which it has done them. Now it is clear, from what has been already said, that there

has been at least an apparent want of light in the force and spirit through which these great works have been done, and that the works have worn in consequence too much a look of machinery. But this will be clearer still if we take, as the happy mean of the middle class, not Mr. Jacob Bright, but his colleague in the representation of Manchester, Mr. Bazley. Mr. Bazley sums up for us, in general, the middle-class, its spirit and its works, at least as well as Mr. Jacob Bright; and he has given us, moreover, a famous sentence, which bears directly on the resolution of our present question—whether there is light enough in our middle-class to make it the proper seat of the authority we wish to establish. When there was a talk some little while ago about the state of middle-class education, Mr. Bazley, as the representative of that class, spoke some memorable words:—"There had been a cry that middle-class education ought to receive more attention. He confessed himself very much surprised by the clamour that was raised. He did not think that class need excite the sympathy either of the legislature or the public." Now this satisfaction of Mr. Bazley with the mental state of the middle-class was truly representative, and enhances his claim (if that were necessary) to stand as the beautiful and virtuous mean of that class. But it is obviously at variance with our definition of culture, or the pursuit of light and perfection, which made light and perfection consist, not in resting and being, but in growing and becoming, in a perpetual advance in beauty and wisdom. So the middle-class is by its essence, as one may say, by its incomparable self-satisfaction decisively expressed through its beautiful and virtuous mean, self-excluded from wielding an authority of which light is to be the very soul.

Clear as this is, it will be made clearer still if we take some representative man as the excess of the middle-class, and remember that the middle-class, in general, is to be conceived as a body swaying between the qualities of its mean and of its excess, and on the whole, of course, as human nature is constituted, inclining rather towards the excess than the mean. Of its excess no better representative can possibly be imagined than the Rev. W. Cassel, a Dissenting minister from Walsall, who came before the public in connection with the proceedings at Birmingham of Mr. Murphy, already mentioned. Speaking in the midst of an irritated population of Catholics, the Rev. W. Cassel exclaimed:—"I say, then, away with the mass! It is from the bottomless pit; and in the bottomless pit shall all liars have their part, in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." And again: "When all the prates were black in Ireland, why didn't the priests say the hocus-pocus over them, and make them all good again?" He shared, too, Mr. Murphy's fears of some invasion of his domestic happiness: "What I wish to say to you as Protestant husbands is, *Take care of your wives!*" And, finally, in the true vein of an Englishman doing as he likes, a vein of which I have at some length pointed out the present dangers, he recommended for imitation the example of some churchwardens at Dublin, among whom,

said he, "there was a Luther and also a Melanchthon," who had made very short work with some ritualist or other, handed him down from his pulpit, and kicked him out. Now it is manifest, as I said in the case of Sir Thomas Bateson, that if we let this excess of the sturdy English middle-class, this conscientious Protestant Dissenter, so strong, so self-reliant, so fully persuaded in his own mind, have his way, he would be capable, with his want of light—or, to use the language of the religious world, with his zeal without knowledge—of kindling a fire which neither he nor any one else could easily quench.

And then comes in, as it did also with the aristocracy, the honesty of our race, and by the voice of another middle-class man, Alderman Wilson, Alderman of the City of London and Colonel of the City of London Militia, proclaims that it has twinges of conscience, and that it will not attempt to cope with our social disorders, and to deal with a business which it feels to be too high for it. Every one remembers how this virtuous Alderman-Colonel, or Colonel-Alderman, led his militia through the London streets ; how the bystanders gathered to see him pass ; how the London roughs, asserting an Englishman's best and most blissful right of doing what he likes, robbed and beat the bystanders ; and how the blameless warrior-magistrate refused to let his troops interfere. "The crowd," he touchingly said afterwards, "was mostly composed of fine healthy strong men, bent on mischief ; if he had allowed his soldiers to interfere they might have been overpowered, their rifles taken from them and used against them by the mob ; a riot, in fact, might have ensued, and been attended with bloodshed, compared with which the assaults and loss of property that actually occurred would have been as nothing." Honest and affecting testimony of the English middle-class to its own inadequacy for the authoritative part one's admiration would sometimes incline one to assign to it ! "Who are we," they say by the voice of their Alderman-Colonel, "that we should not be overpowered if we attempt to cope with social anarchy, our rifles taken from us and used against us by the mob, and we, perhaps, robbed and beaten ourselves ? Or what light have we, beyond a free-born Englishman's impulse to do as he likes, which could justify us in preventing, at the cost of bloodshed, other free-born Englishmen from doing as they like, and robbing and beating us as much as they please ? "

This distrust of themselves as an adequate centre of authority does not mark the working-class, as was shown by their readiness the other day in Hyde Park to take upon themselves all the functions of government. But this comes from the working-class being, as I have often said, still an embryo, of which no one can yet quite foresee the final development ; and from its not having the same experience and self-knowledge as the aristocratic and middle classes. Honesty it no doubt has, just like the other classes of Englishmen, but honesty in an inchoate and untrained state ; and meanwhile its powers of action, which are, as Mr. Frederic Harrison says, exceedingly ready, easily run away with it. That it cannot at

present have a sufficiency of light which comes by culture—that is, by reading, observing, and thinking—is clear from the very nature of its condition; and, indeed, we saw that Mr. Frederic Harrison, in seeking to make a free stage:for its bright powers of sympathy and ready powers of action, had to begin by throwing overboard culture, and flouting it as only fit for a professor of *belles lettres*. Still, to make it perfectly manifest that no more in the working-class than in the aristocratic and middle classes can one find an adequate centre of authority—that is, as culture teaches us to conceive our required authority, of light—let us again follow, with this class, the method we have followed with the aristocratic and middle classes, and try to bring before our minds representative men, who may figure to us its virtue and its excess. We must not take, of course, Colonel Dickson or Mr. Beales; because Colonel Dickson, by his martial profession and dashing exterior, seems to belong properly, like Julius Caesar and Mirabeau and other great popular leaders, to the aristocratic class, and to be carried into the popular ranks only by his ambition or his genius; while Mr. Beales belongs to our solid middle-class, and, perhaps, if he had not been a great popular leader, would have been a Philistine. But Mr. Odger, whose speeches we have all read, and of whom his friends relate, besides, much that is favourable, may very well stand for the beautiful and virtuous mean of our present working-class; and I think everybody will admit that in Mr. Odger, as in Lord Elcho, there is manifestly, with all his good points, some insufficiency of light. The excess of the working-class, in its present state of development, is perhaps best shown in Mr. Bradlaugh, the iconoclast, who seems to be almost for baptizing us all in blood and fire into his new social dispensation, and to whose reflections, now that I have once been set going on Bishop Wilson's track, I cannot forbear commanding this maxim of the good old man: “Intemperance in talk makes a dreadful havoc in the heart.” Mr. Bradlaugh, like Sir Thomas Bateson and the Rev. W. Cassel, is evidently capable, if he had his head given him, of running us all into great dangers and confusion. I conclude, therefore—what, indeed, few of those who do me the honour to read this disquisition are likely to dispute—that we can as little find in the working-class as in the aristocratic or in the middle class our much-wanted source of authority, as culture suggests it to us.

Well, then, what if we tried to rise above the idea of class to the idea of the whole community, *the State*, and to find our centre of light and authority there? Every one of us has the idea of country, as a sentiment; hardly any one of us has the idea of *the State*, as a working power. And why? Because we habitually live in our ordinary selves, which do not carry us beyond the ideas and wishes of the class to which we happen to belong. And we are all afraid of giving to the State too much power, because we only conceive of the State as something equivalent to the class in occupation of the executive government, and are afraid of that class abusing power to its own purposes. If we strengthen the State with the

aristocratic class in occupation of the executive government, we imagine we are delivering ourselves up captive to the ideas and wishes of Sir Thomas Bateson ; if with the middle-class in occupation of the executive government, to those of the Rev. W. Cassel ; if with the working-class, to those of Mr. Bradlaugh. And with much justice ; owing to the exaggerated notion which we English, as I have said, entertain of the right and blessedness of the mere doing as one likes, of the affirming oneself, and oneself just as it is. People of the aristocratic class want to affirm their ordinary selves, their likings and dislikings ; people of the middle-class the same, people of the working-class the same. By our everyday selves we are separate, personal, at war ; we are only safe from one another's tyranny when no one has any power ; and this safety, in its turn, cannot save us from anarchy. And when, therefore, anarchy presents itself as a danger to us, we know not where to turn.

But by our *best self* we are united, impersonal, at harmony. We are in no peril from giving authority to this, because it is the truest friend we all of us can have ; and when anarchy is a danger to us, to this authority we may turn with sure trust. Well, and this is the very self which culture seeks to develope in us ; at the expence of our old untransformed self, taking pleasure only in doing what it likes or is used to do, and exposing us to the risk of clashing with every one else who is doing the same ! So that our poor culture, which is flouted as so unpractical, leads us to the very ideas capable of meeting the great want of our present embarrassed times ! We want an authority, and we find nothing but jealous classes, checks, and a dead-lock ; culture suggests the idea of *the State*. We find no basis for a firm State-power in our ordinary selves ; culture suggests one to us in our *best self*.

It cannot but acutely try a tender conscience to be accused, in a practical country like ours, of keeping aloof from the work and hope of a multitude of earnest-hearted men, and of merely toying with poetry and aesthetics. So it is with no little sense of relief that I find myself thus in the position of one who makes a contribution in aid of the practical necessities of our times. The great thing, it will be observed, is to find our *best self*, and to seek to affirm nothing but that ; not—as we English with our over-value for merely being free and busy have been so accustomed to do—resting satisfied with a self which comes uppermost long before our *best self*, and affirming that with blind energy. In short—to go back yet once more to Bishop Wilson—of these two excellent rules of Bishop Wilson's for a man's guidance : “Firstly, never go against the best light you have ; secondly, take care that your light be not darkness,” we English have followed with praiseworthy zeal the first rule, but we have not given so much heed to the second. We have gone manfully, the Rev. W. Cassel and the rest of us, according to the best light we have ; but we have not taken enough care that this should be really the best light possible for us, that it should not be darkness. And, our honesty being very great, conscience has whispered to us that the

light we were following, our ordinary self, was indeed, perhaps, only an inferior self, only darkness ; and that it would not do to impose this seriously on all the world.

But our best self inspires faith, and is capable of affording a serious principle of authority. For example.—We are on our way to what the late Duke of Wellington, with his strong sagacity, foresaw and admirably described as “a revolution by due course of law.” This is undoubtedly—if we are still to live and grow and this famous nation is not to stagnate and dwindle away on the one hand, or, on the other, to perish miserably in mere anarchy and confusion—what we are on the way to. Great changes there must be, for a revolution cannot accomplish itself without great changes ; yet order there must be, for without order a revolution cannot accomplish itself by due course of law. So whatever brings risk of tumult and disorder, multitudinous processions in the streets of our crowded towns, multitudinous meetings in their public places and parks—demonstrations perfectly unnecessary in the present course of our affairs—our best self, or right reason, plainly enjoins us to prohibit. It enjoins us to encourage and uphold the occupants of the executive power, whoever they may be, in firmly prohibiting them. But it does this clearly and resolutely, and is thus a real principle of authority, because it does it with a free conscience ; because in thus provisionally strengthening the executive power, it knows that it is not doing this merely to enable Sir Thomas Bateson to affirm himself as against Mr. Bradlaugh, or the Rev. W. Cassel to affirm himself as against both. It knows that it is establishing *the State*, or organ of our collective best self, of our national right reason ; and it has the testimony of conscience that it is establishing the State on behalf of whatever great changes are needed, just as much as on behalf of order ; establishing it to deal just as stringently, when the time comes, with Sir Thomas Bateson’s Protestant ascendancy, or with the Rev. W. Cassel’s sorry education of his children, as it deals with Mr. Bradlaugh’s street-processions.

But I know that in these humble speculations of mine I am watched by redoubtable adversaries ; and—not having the safeguard of a philosophy with principles coherent, interdependent, subordinate, and derivative—it behoves me to walk with great caution. So I must take a little more time to show in somewhat fuller detail the different ways in which light, that new principle of authority which culture supplies to us, may have a real practical operation upon our national life and society.

Richardson's Novels.

The literary artifice, so often patronized by Lord Macaulay, of describing a character by a series of paradoxes, is of course, in one sense, a mere artifice. It is easy enough to make a dark grey black and a light grey white, and to bring the two into unnatural proximity. But it rests also upon the principle which is more of a platitude than a paradox, that our chief faults often lie close to our chief merits. The greatest man is perhaps one who is so equably developed that he has the strongest faculties in the most perfect equilibrium, and is apt to be somewhat uninteresting to the rest of mankind. The man of lower eminence has some one or more faculties developed out of all proportion to the rest, with the natural result of occasionally overbalancing him. A first-rate gymnast with enormous muscular power in his arms and chest, and comparatively feeble lower limbs, can sometimes perform the strangest feats in consequence of his conformation, but owes his awkwardness to the same singularity. He astonishes us for the time more than the well-proportioned man who can do fewer wonders and more useful work. In the intellectual world the contrasts in one man are often greater. Extraordinary memories with weak logical faculties, wonderful imaginative sensibility with a complete absence of self-control, and other defective conformations of mind, supply the raw materials for a luminary of the second order, and imply a predisposition to certain faults, which are natural complements to the conspicuous merits.

Such reflections naturally occur in speaking of one of our greatest literary reputations, whose popularity is almost in an inverse ratio to his celebrity. Every one knows the names of Sir Charles Grandison and Clarissa Harlowe. They are amongst the established types which serve to point a paragraph; but the volumes in which they are described remain for the most part in undisturbed repose, sleeping peacefully amongst Charles Lamb's *biblia a-biblia*, books which are no books, or, as he explains, those books "which no gentleman's library should be without." They never enjoy the honours of cheap reprints; the modern reader shudders at a novel in eight volumes, and declines to dig for amusement in so profound a mine; when some bold inquirer dips into their pages he generally fancies that the sleep of years has been somehow absorbed into the paper; a certain soporific aroma exhales from the endless files of fictitious correspondence. This contrast, however, between popularity and celebrity is not so rare as to deserve special notice. Richardson is only one of many authors whose fame seldom rouses a very lively curiosity. We should like to see a return of the number of persons who have fairly read to the end of the *Fairy Queen*, or of *Paradise Lost*, who could pass an examination off-hand even in books of greater claims to popu-

larity—say, in *Robinson Crusoe*, or *Gulliver's Travels*. Richardson's slumber may be deeper than that of most men of equal fame, but it is not quite unprecedented. The string of paradoxes, which it would be easy to apply to Richardson, would turn upon a different point; that even a celebrated writer should sleep well a century after his death is intelligible; but there is something decidedly paradoxical in the nature of his reputation. Here is a man, we might say, whose special characteristic it was to be a milksop—who provoked Fielding to a coarse hearty burst of ridicule—who was steeped in the incense of useless adulation from a throng of middle-aged lady worshippers—who wrote his novels expressly to recommend little unimpeachable moral maxims, as that evil courses lead to unhappy deaths, that ladies ought to observe the laws of propriety, and generally that it is an excellent thing to be thoroughly respectable; who lived an obscure life in a petty coterie in fourth-rate London society, and was in no respect at a point of view more exalted than that of his companions. What greater contrast can be imagined in its way than that between Richardson, with his second-rate eighteenth-century priggishness and his twopenny-tractmorality, and the modern school of French novels, who are certainly not prigs, and whose morality is by no means that of tracts? We might have expected *a priori* that they would have summarily put him down, by whatever epithet corresponds with them to the slang term of Philistine which is now so popular with us. Yet Richardson is a name of power with their best writers; Balzac for example, and George Sand, speak of him with reverence; and a writer who is, perhaps, as odd a contrast to Richardson as could well be imagined—Alfred de Musset—calls *Clarissa*, *le premier roman du monde*. What is the secret which enables the steady old printer, with his singular limitation to his own career of time and space, to impose upon the wild Byronic Parisian of the next century? Amongst his contemporaries Diderot, the atheistic author of one of the filthiest novels extant, expresses an almost fanatical admiration of Richardson for his purity and power, and declares characteristically that he will place Richardson's works on the same shelf with those of Moses, Homer, Euripides, and other favourite writers; he even goes so far as to excuse Clarissa's belief in Christianity on the ground of her youthful innocence. To continue in the paradoxical vein, we might ask how the quiet tradesman could create the character which has stood ever since for a type of the fine gentleman of the period; or how from the most prosaic of centuries should spring one of the most poetical of feminine ideals? We can hardly fancy a genuine hero with a pigtail, or a heroine in a hoop and high-heeled shoes, nor believe that persons who wore those articles of costume could possess any very exalted virtues. Perhaps our grandchildren may have the same difficulty about the race which wears crinolines and chimney-pot hats.

It is a fact, however, that our grandfathers, in spite of their belief in pigtails and in Pope's poetry, and other matters that have gone out of fashion, had some very excellent qualities, and even some genuine

sentiment, in their compositions. Indeed, now that their peculiarities have been finally packed away in various lumber-rooms, and the revolt against the old-fashioned school of thought and manners has become triumphant instead of militant, we are beginning to see the picturesque side of their character. They have gathered something of the halo that comes with the lapse of years ; and social habits that looked prosaic enough to contemporaries, and to the generation which had to fight against them, have gained a touch of romance. Richardson's characters wear a costume and speak a language which are indeed queer and old-fashioned, but are now far enough removed from the present to have a certain piquancy ; and it is becoming easier to recognize the real genius which created them, as the active aversion to the forms in which it was necessarily clothed tends to disappear. The wigs and the high-heeled shoes are not without a certain pleasing quaintness ; and when we have surmounted this cause of disgust, we can see more plainly what was the real power which men of the most opposite schools in art have recognized. That Richardson was, as we have said, something of the milksop is obvious ; but it is not so plain that that is a very serious objection to a novelist. Every man should have in him some considerable infusion of feminine though not of effeminate character ; especially a novelist should have the delicate perception, the sensibility to emotion, and the interest in small details, which only women exhibit in perfection. Indeed this is so true, that there seems to be at present some probability that the art of novel writing will pass altogether into feminine hands. It may be long before the advocates of woman's rights will conquer other provinces of labour ; but they have already monopolized to a great extent the immense novel manufacturing industry of Great Britain. Now Richardson had certain other talents of a very high order to which we shall presently refer ; but his most obvious merits and defects resulted from his feminine characteristics. His sympathy with woman is as obvious in his literature as in his life. Richardson, as our readers know, was perpetual president of one of those institutions which have of late flourished and spread mightily—a mutual admiration society. Never was there a body in which the chief received a more perpetual tribute of flattery, and repaid it by more elaborate concession. Colley Cibber occasionally appeared as a courtier, and surpassed the regular female attendants in the vigour of his phrases, though scarcely in fervour. We find him writing—"The delicious meal I made off Miss Byron—the heroine of *Sir Charles Grandison*—on Sunday last, has given me an appetite for another slice of her off the spit before she is served on the public table :" and he elegantly proposes to "come and piddle off a bit more of her." But he expresses himself more energetically, as reported by a lady correspondent. With a profane oath, he swears that he "would never believe that Providence or eternal wisdom or goodness governed the world, if merit, innocence, and beauty were to be so destroyed"—that is, if Richardson admitted a certain catastrophe to his novel. "These," as the lady reporter mildly adds, "were his strongly emphatic expres-

sions." The ladies, however, do very well in their own way. An unknown lady writes to him under a feigned signature, and exclaims with mere ingenuous flattery, "I do assure you nothing can induce me to read your history through—it is too well executed for such tender and foolish hearts as mine!" However she manages to proceed, and entreats him to give a turn to the story, "which will make his despairing readers half mad with joy." She tells him that "all the good-natured and compassionate and distressed are on their knees at his feet, and hope they will not beg in vain." "Pray, sir," she exclaims, "make him (Lovelace) happy—you can so easily do it—pray reform him—will you not save a soul, sir?" And Richardson takes in all this rant with perfect seriousness, replies in a voluminous letter of argument, in which the affectation of sublime wisdom does not conceal a kind of purring complacency, and evidently bolts the flattery whole. The lady from whom we have quoted became a settled correspondent, and, when more familiar, ventured occasionally upon such a tender and humble expostulation as a country priest might offer to a pope. Nor was Richardson slow at returning compliments in kind. Writing to Miss Fielding, a sister of his great rival and contrast, he assures her that her late brother's knowledge of the human heart was not comparable to hers. He saw only the outside of the clockwork—she its finer spring and movements. Truly, in this commerce both parties could boast of their gains. Richardson became a kind of Protestant confessor; he gave ladies solemn advice on little discussions to which they invited him; told them whether they ought to learn Latin, and argued as to the probability of a reformed rake proving a good husband; as is not uncommon in such cases, the teacher seems to catch the tone of his penitents; his letters to young ladies are exactly like young ladies' letters, and full of the gossipping morality and sentimental platitudes in which women occasionally delight. They are worth a glance, because the style is identical with that of the novels, and explains to some extent the nature of his art. The sympathy with women is equally conspicuous in his works. Nothing is more rare than to find a great novelist who can satisfactorily describe the opposite sex. Women's heroes are women in disguise, or mere lay-figures, walking gentlemen who parade tolerably through their parts, but have no real vitality. Miss Brontë, for example, showed extraordinary power in *Jane Eyre*; but Jane Eyre's lovers, Rockingham and St. John, are painted from the outside; they are, perhaps, what some women think men ought to be, but not what any man of fame at all comparable to Miss Brontë's could ever have imagined. Her most successful men—such as M. Paul in *Villette*—are those who have the strongest feminine element in their composition. On the other hand, the heroines of male writers are for the most part unnaturally strained or quite colourless; male hands are too heavy for the delicate work required. Milton could draw a majestic Satan, but his Eve is no better than a good-managing housekeeper who knows her place. It is, therefore, remarkable that Richardson's greatest triumph should be in describing a woman, and

that most of his feminine characters are more life-like, and more delicately discriminated than his men. Unluckily his conspicuous faults result from the same cause. His moral prosings savour of the endless gossip over a dish of chocolate, in which his heroines delight ; we can imagine the applause with which his admiring feminine circle would receive his demonstration of the fact, that adversity is harder to bear than prosperity, or the sentiment that “ a man of principle, whose love is founded in reason, and whose object is mind rather than person, must make a worthy woman happy.” These are admirable sentiments ; but they savour of the serious tea-party. If *Tom Jones* has about it an occasional suspicion of beer and pipes at the bar, *Sir Charles Grandison* recalls an indefinite consumption of tea and small talk. In short, the feminine part of Richardson’s character has a little too much affinity to *Mrs. Gamp*—not that he would ever be guilty of putting gin in his cup, but that he would have the same capacity for spinning out indefinite twaddle of a superior kind. And, of course, he fell into the faults which beset the members of mutual admiration societies in general ; but especially those which consist chiefly of women. Men who meet for purposes of mutual flattery, become unnaturally solemn and priggish ; they never free themselves from the suspicion that the older members of their coterie may be laughing at them behind their backs. But the flattery of women is so much more delicate, and so much more sincere, that it is far more dangerous. It is a poultice which in time softens the hardest outside. Richardson yielded as entirely as any curate exposed to a shower of slippers. He evidently wrote under the impression that he was not merely an imaginative writer of the highest order, but also a great moralist. “ He taught the passions to move,” says his admirer, Dr. Johnson, “ at the command of virtue.” Certainly that was Richardson’s own view. He was reforming the world, putting down vice, sending duelling out of fashion, and inculcating the lessons of the pulpit in a far more attractive form. A modern novelist is half ashamed of his art ; he disclaims earnestly any serious purpose ; his highest aim is to amuse his readers, and his greatest boast that he amuses them by honourable, or at least by harmless means. There are, indeed, novelists with a purpose, who write to inculcate High-Church or Low-Church principles, or to prove that society at large is out of joint ; but a direct intention to prove that men ought not to steal or get drunk, or commit any other atrocities, is generally considered to be beside the novelist’s purpose, and its introduction to be a fault of art. Indeed there is much to be said against it. In our youth we used to read a poem about a cruel little boy who went out to fish and was punished by somehow becoming suspended by his chin from a hook in the larder. It never produced much effect upon us, because we felt that the accident was, to say the least, rather exceptional ; at most, we fished on, and were careful about the larder. The same principle applies to the poetic justice dealt by most novelists. When Richardson kills off his villains by violent deaths, we know too well that many villains live to a good old age, leave

handsome fortunes, and are buried under the handsomest of tombstones, with the most elegant of epitaphs. This very rough device for inculcating morality is of course ineffectual, and produces some artistic blemishes. The direct exhortations to his readers to be good are still more annoying; no human being can long endure a mixture of preaching and story-telling. For Heaven's sake, we exclaim, tell us what happens to Clarissa, and don't stop to prove that honesty is the best policy! In a wider sense, however, the seriousness of Richardson's purpose is of high value. He is so keenly in earnest; so profoundly interested about his characters; so determined to make us enter into their motives, that we cannot help being carried away; if he never spares an opportunity of giving us a lecture, at least his zeal in setting forth an example never flags for an instant. The effort to give us an ideally perfect character seems to stimulate his imagination, and leads to a certain intensity of realization which we are apt to miss in the novelist's without a purpose. He is always, as it were, writing at high-pressure and under a sense of responsibility.

The method which he adopts lends itself very conveniently to heighten this effect. It may be reckoned as another feminine peculiarity in Richardson, that he had an inordinate propensity to letter-writing. As a boy he wrote love-letters for the young women of the neighbourhood. When he was grown up, he was led to write novels by the admiration expressed for his strange fertility in this direction. Richardson's novels, indeed, are not so much novels put for convenience under the form of letters, as letters expanded till they become novels. A genuine novelist who should put his work into the unnatural shape of a correspondence would probably find it a very awkward expedient; but Richardson gradually worked up to the novel from the conception of a collection of letters; and his method, therefore, came spontaneously to him. He started from the plan of writing letters to illustrate a certain point of morality, and to make them more effective attributed them to a fictitious character. The result was the gigantic tract called *Pamela*—distinctly the worst of his works—of which it is enough to say at present that it succeeds neither in being moral nor in amusing. It shows, however, a truly amazing fertility in a specially feminine art. We have all suffered from the propensity of some female minds (the causes of which we will not attempt to analyze) for pouring forth indefinite floods of correspondence. We know the heartless fashion in which some ladies, even in these days of penny postage, will fill a sheet of note-paper and proceed to cross their writing till the page becomes a chequer-work of unintelligible hieroglyphics. But we may feel gratitude in looking back to the days when time hung heavier, and letter-writing was a more serious business. The letters of those times may recall the fearful and wonderful labours of tapestry in which ladies employed their needles by way of killing time. The monuments of both kinds are a fearful indication of the *ennui* from which the perpetrators must have suffered. We pity those who endured the toil as we pity the prisoners whose patient ingenuity has carved a passage through a stone wall with a rusty nail.

Richardson's heroines, and his heroes too, for that matter, would have been portents at any time. We will take an example at hazard. Miss Byron, on the 22nd of March, writes a letter of fourteen pages. The same day she follows it up by two of six and of twelve pages respectively. On the 23rd she leads off with a letter of eighteen pages, and another of ten. On the 24th she gives us two, filling together thirty pages, at the end of which she remarks that she is forced to lay down her pen, and then adds a postscript of six; on the 25th she confines herself to two pages; but after a Sunday's rest she makes another start of equal vigour. In three days, therefore, she covers ninety-six pages. Two of the pages are about equal to one in this magazine. Consequently, in three days' correspondence, referring to the events of the day, she would fill forty-eight pages of the *Cornhill Magazine*,—a task, the magnitude of which may be appreciated by any one who will try the experiment. We should say that she must have written about ten hours a day, and are not surprised at her remark that she has on one occasion only managed two hours' sleep.

It would, of course, be the height of pedantry to dwell upon this, as though a fictitious personage were to be in all respects bounded by the narrow limits of human capacity. It is not the object of a really good novelist, nor does it come within the legitimate means of high art in any department, to produce an actual illusion. Showmen in some foreign palaces call upon us to admire paintings which we cannot distinguish from bas-reliefs; the deception is, of course, a mere trick, and the paintings are simply childish. On the stage we do not require to believe that the scenery is really what it imitates, and the attempt to introduce scraps of real life is a clear proof of a low artistic aim. Similarly a novelist is not only justified in writing so as to prove that his work is fictitious; but he almost necessarily hampers himself, to the prejudice of his work, if he imposes upon himself the condition that his book shall be capable of being mistaken for a genuine narrative. Every good novelist lets us into secrets about the private thoughts of his characters which it would be impossible to obtain in real life. When Mr. Pendennis relates the history of the Newcomes, he very properly gives us long conversations, and even soliloquies and meditations, of which a real Mr. Pendennis must have been necessarily ignorant. We do not, therefore, blame Richardson because his characters have a power of writing which no mortal could ever attain. His fault, indeed, is exactly the contrary. He very erroneously fancies that he is bound to convince us of the possibility of all his machinery, and often produces the very shock to our belief which he seeks to avoid. He is constantly trying to account by elaborate devices for the fertile correspondence of his characters, when it is perfectly plain that they are simply writing for purposes of the fiction. We should never have asked a question as to the authenticity of the letters, if he did not force the question upon us; and no art can induce us for a moment to accept the proffered illusion. For example, Miss Byron gives us a long account of conversations between persons whom she did not know, which took place ten years before. It is

much better that the impossibility should be frankly accepted, on the clear ground that authors of novels, and consequently their creatures, have the prerogative of omniscience. At least, the slightest account of the way in which she came by the knowledge would be enough to satisfy us for all purposes of fiction. Richardson is not content with this, and elaborately demonstrates that she might have known a number of minute details which it is perfectly plain that a real Miss Byron could never have known, and thus dashes into our faces an improbability which we should have been quite content to pass unnoticed.

The method, however, of telling the story by the correspondence of the actors produces more important effects. The ninety-six pages we have noticed are all devoted to the proceedings of three days. They are filled, for the most part, with interminable conversations. The story advances by a very few steps; but we know all that every one of the persons concerned has to say about the matter. We discover what was Sir Charles Grandison's relation at a particular time to a certain Italian lady, Clementina. We are told exactly what view he took of his own position, what view Clementina took of it; what Miss Byron had to say to Sir Charles on the subject, and what advice her relations bestowed upon Miss Byron. Then we have all the sentiments of Sir Charles Grandison's sisters, and of his brothers-in-law, and of his reverend old tutor; and the sentiments of all the Lady Clementina's family, and the incidental remarks of a number of subordinate actors. In short, we see the characters all round in all their relations to each other, in every possible variation and permutation; we are present at all the discussions which take place before every step, and watch the gradual variation of all the phases of the positions. We get the same sort of elaborate familiarity with every aspect of affairs that we should receive from reading a blue-book full of some prolix diplomatic correspondence; indeed, Sir Charles Grandison closely resembles such a blue-book, for the plot is carried on mainly by elaborate negotiations between three different families, with proposals, and counter proposals, and amended proposals, and a final settlement of the very complicated business by a deliberate signing of two different sets of articles. One of them, we need hardly say, is a marriage settlement; the other is a definite treaty between the lady who is not married and her family, the discussion of which occupies many pages. The extent to which we are drawn into the minutest details may be inferred from the fact that nearly a volume is given to marrying Sir Charles Grandison to Miss Byron, after all difficulties have been surmounted. We have at full length all the discussions by which the day is fixed, and all the remarks of the unfortunate lovers of both parties, and all the criticisms of both families, and finally an elaborate account of the ceremony, with the names of the persons who went in the separate coaches, the dresses of the bride and bridesmaids, and the sums which Sir Charles gave away to the village girls who strewed flowers on the pathway. Surely the feminine element in Richardson's character was a little in excess.

The result of all this is a sort of Dutch painting of extraordinary minuteness. The art reminds us of the patient labour of a line engraver, who works for days at making out one little bit of minute stippling and cross-hatching. The characters are displayed to us step by step and line by line. We are gradually forced into familiarity with them by a process resembling that by which we learn to know people in real life. We are treated to few set analyses or summary descriptions, but by constantly reading their letters and listening to their talk we gradually form an opinion of the actors. We see them, too, all round ; instead of, as is usual in modern novels, regarding them steadily from one point of view ; we know what each person thinks of every one else, and what every one else thinks of him ; they are brought into a stereoscopic distinctness by combining the different aspects of their character. Of course, a method of this kind involves much labour on the part both of writer and reader. It is evident that Richardson did not think of amusing a stray half-hour in a railway or in a club smoking-room ; he counted upon readers who would apply themselves seriously to a task, in the hope of improving their morals as much as of gaining some harmless amusement. But it must also be said that, considering the cumbrous nature of the process, the spirit with which it is applied is wonderful. Richardson's own interest in his actors never flags. The distinct style of every correspondent is faithfully preserved with singular vivacity. When we have read a few letters we are never at a loss to tell, from the style alone of any short passage, who is the imaginary author. Consequently, readers who can bear to have their amusement diluted, who are content with an imperceptibly slow development of plot, and can watch without impatience the approach of a foreseen incident through a couple of volumes, may find the prolixity less intolerable than might be expected. If they will be content to skip two letters out of every three, they may be entertained with a series of pictures of character and manners skilfully contrasted and brilliantly coloured, though with a limited allowance of incident. Within his own sphere, no writer exceeds him in clearness and delicacy of conception. We may doubt whether even Miss Austen's female characters are more skilfully developed.

In another way, the machinery of a fictitious correspondence is rather troublesome. As the author never appears in his own person, he is often obliged to trust his characters with trumpeting their own virtues. Sir Charles Grandison has to tell us himself of his own virtuous deeds : how he disarms ruffians who attack him in overwhelming numbers, and converts evil-doers by impressive advice ; and, still more awkwardly, he has to repeat the amazing compliments which everybody is always paying him. Richardson does his best to evade the necessity ; he couples all his virtuous heroes with friendly confidants, who relieve the virtuous heroes of the tiresome task of self-adulation ; he supplies the heroes themselves with elaborate reasons for overcoming their modesty, and makes them apologise profusely for the unwelcome task. Still, ingenious as his expedients may be, and

willing as we are to make allowance for the necessities of his task, we cannot quite free ourselves from an unpleasant suspicion as to the simplicity of his characters. *Clarissa* is comparatively free from this fault, though Clarissa takes a questionable pleasure in uttering the finest sentiments and posing herself as a model of virtue. But in *Sir Charles Grandison*, the fulsome interchange of flattery becomes offensive even in fiction. The virtuous characters give and receive an amount of eulogy enough to turn the strongest stomachs. How amiable is A. ! says B. ; how virtuous is C., and how marvellously witty is D. And then A., C., and D. go through the same performance, adding a proper compliment to B. in place of the exclamation appropriate to themselves. The only parallel in modern times is to be found at some of the public dinners, where every man proposes his neighbour's health with a tacit understanding that he is himself to furnish the text for a similar oration. But then at dinners people have the excuse of a state of modified sobriety.

This fault is, as we have said, aggravated by the epistolary method. That method makes it necessary that each person should display his or her own virtues, as in an exhibition of gymnastics the performers walk round and show their muscles. But the fault lies a good deal deeper. Every writer, consciously or unconsciously, puts himself into his novels, and exhibits his own character even more distinctly than that of his heroes. Shakspeare must have had a strong dash of Hamlet in his composition, or he could not have drawn Hamlet's character. And Richardson, the head of a little circle of conscientious admirers of each other's virtues, could not but reproduce on a different scale the tone of his own society. The Grandisons, and the families of Miss Byron and Clementina merely repeat a practice with which he was tolerably familiar at home ; whilst his characters represent to some extent the idealised Richardson himself ;—and this leads us to the most essential characteristic of his novels. The greatest woman in France, according to Napoleon's brutal remark, was the woman who had the most children. In a different sense, the saying may pass for truth. The greatest writer is the one who has produced the largest family of immortal children. Those of whom it can be said that they have really added a new type to the fictitious world, are indeed few in number. Cervantes is in the front rank of all imaginative creators, because he has given birth to Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Richardson's literary representatives are far indeed below these, but Richardson too may boast, that in his narrower sphere of thought he has invented two characters that have still a strong vitality. They show all the weaknesses inseparable from the age and country of their origin. They are far inferior to the highest ideals of the great poets of the world ; they are cramped and deformed by the frigid conventionalities of their century and the narrow society in which they move and live. But for all that they stir the emotions of a distant generation with power enough to show that their author must have pierced below the surface into the deeper and more perennial springs of human passion. These two

characters are of course Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison; and we may endeavour shortly to analyze the sources of their enduring interest.

Sir Charles Grandison has passed into a proverb. When Carlyle calls Lafayette a Grandison-Cromwell, he hits off one of those admirable nicknames which paint a character for us at once. Sir Charles Grandison is the model fine gentleman of the eighteenth century,—the master of correct deportment, the unimpeachable representative of the old school. Richardson tells us with a certain naïveté that he has been accused of describing an impossible character; that Sir Charles is a man absolutely without a fault, or at least with faults visible only on a most microscopic observation. In fact, the only fault to which Sir Charles himself pleads guilty, in seven volumes, is that he once rather loses his temper. Two ruffians try to bully him in his own house, and even draw their swords upon him. Sir Charles so far forgets himself as to draw his own sword, disarm both of his opponents, and turn them out of doors. He cannot forgive himself, he says, that he has been "provoked by two such men to violate the sanctity of his own house." His only excuse is, "that there were two of them; and that tho' I drew, yet I had the command of myself so far as only to defend myself, when I might have done with them what I pleased." According to Richardson, this venial offence is the worst blot on Sir Charles's character. We certainly do not blame him for the attempt to draw an ideally perfect hero. It is a perfectly legitimate aim in fiction, and the only question can be whether he has succeeded: for Richardson's own commendation cannot be taken as quite sufficient, neither can we quite accept the ingenious artifice by which all the secondary characters perform as decoy-birds to attract our admiration. They do their very best to induce us to join in their hymns of praise. "Grandison," says a Roman Catholic bishop, "were he one of us, might expect canonization." "How," exclaims his uncle, after a conversation with his paragon of a nephew, "how shall I bear my own littleness?" A party of reprobates about town have a long dispute with him, endeavouring to force him into a duel. At the end of it one of them exclaims admiringly, "Curse me, if I believe there is such another man in the world!" "I never saw a hero till now," says another. "I had rather have Sir C. Grandison for my friend than the greatest prince on earth," says a third. "I had rather," replies his friend, "be Sir C. Grandison for this one past hour than the Great Mogul all my life." And the general conclusion is, "what poor toads are we!" "This man shows us," as a lady declares, "that goodness and greatness are synonymous words;" and when his sister marries, she complains that her brother "has long made all other men indifferent to her. Such an infinite difference!" In the evening, according to custom, she dances a minuet with her bridegroom, but whispers a friend that she would have performed better had she danced with her brother.

The structure, however, of the story itself is the best illustration of Sir Charles's admirable qualities. The plot is very simple. He reses-

Miss Byron from an attempt at a forcible abduction. Miss Byron, according to her friends, is the queen of her sex, and is amongst women what Sir Charles is amongst men. Of course, they straightway fall in love. Sir Charles, however, shows symptoms of a singular reserve, which is at last explained by the fact that he is already half engaged to a noble Italian lady, Clementina. He has promised in fact to marry her if certain objections on the score of his country and religion can be surmounted. The interest lies chiefly in the varying inclinations of the balance, at one moment favourable to Miss Byron, and at another to the "saint and angel" Clementina. When Miss Ryron thinks that Sir Charles will be bound in honour to marry Clementina, she begins to pine; "she visibly falls away; and her fine complexion fades;" her friends "watch in silent love every turn of her mild and patient eye, every change of her charming countenance; for they know too well to what to impute the malady which has approached the best of hearts; they know that the cure cannot be within the art of the physician." When Clementina fears that the scruples of her relatives will separate her from Sir Charles, she takes the still more decided step of going mad, and some of her madness would be very touching if it were not a trifle too much after the conventional pattern of mad women in novels and on the stage. Whilst these two ladies are breaking their hearts about Sir Charles, they do justice to each other's merits; Harriet will never be happy unless she knows that the admirable Clementina has reconciled herself to the loss of her adored; when Clementina finds herself finally separated from her lover, she sincerely implores Sir Charles to marry her more fortunate rival. Never was there such a display of fine feeling and utter absence of jealousy. Meanwhile a lovely ward of Sir Charles finds it necessary to her peace of mind to be separated from her guardian; and another beautiful, but rather less admirable, Italian actually follows him to England to persuade him to accept her hand. Four ladies—all of them patterns of all physical, moral, and intellectual excellence, are breaking their hearts; and though they are so excellent, that they overcome their natural jealousy, they can scarcely look upon any other man after having known this model of all his sex. Indeed, every woman who approaches him falls desperately in love with him, unless she is his sister or old enough to be his grandmother. The plot of the novel depends upon an attraction for the fair sex which is apparently irresistible; and the men, if they are virtuous, rejoice to sit admiringly at his feet, and if they are vicious retire abashed from his presence, to entreat his good advice when they are upon their deathbeds.

All this is easy enough. A novelist can make his women fall in love with his hero, as easily as, with a stroke of the pen, he can endow him with fifty thousand a year, or bestow upon him every virtue under heaven. Neither has he any difficulty in making him the finest dancer in England, or giving him such marvellous skill with the small-sword that he can avoid the sin of dawdling by instantaneously disarming his most formidable opponents. The real question is, whether he can animate this conglome-

rate of all conceivable virtues with a real human soul, set him before us as a living and breathing reality, and make us feel that if we had known him, we too should have been ready to swell the full chorus of admiration. It is rather more difficult to convey the impression which a perusal of his correspondence and conversation leaves upon an unprejudiced mind. Does Sir Charles, when we come to know him intimately—for with the ample materials provided, we really seem to know him—fairly support the amazing burden thrown upon him? Do we feel a certain disappointment when we meet the man whom all ladies love, and in whom every gentleman confesses a superior nature?

There are two anecdotes about Sir Charles which seem to us to indicate his character better than any elaborate analysis. Voltaire, we know, ridiculed the proud English, who with the same scissors cut off the heads of their kings and the tails of their horses. To this last weakness Sir Charles was superior. His horses, says Miss Byron, “are not docked; their tails are only tied up when they are on the road.” She would wish to find some fault with him, but as she forcibly says, “if he be of opinion that the tails of these noble animals are not only a natural ornament, but of real use to defend them from the vexatious insects that in summer are so apt to annoy them, how far from a dispraise is this humane consideration!” The other anecdote is of a different kind. When Sir Charles goes to church he does not, like some other gentlemen, bow low to the ladies of his acquaintance, and then to others of the gentry. No! “Sir Charles had first other devoirs to pay. He paid us his second compliments.” From these two exemplary actions we must infer his whole character. It should have been inscribed on his tombstone, “He would not dock his horses’ tails.” That is, the most trifling details of his conduct are regulated on the most serious considerations. He is one of those solemn beings who can’t shave themselves without implicitly asserting a great moral principle. He finds sermons in his horses’ tails; he could give an excellent reason for the quantity of lace on his coat, which was due, it seems, to a sentiment of filial reverence; and he could not fix his hour for dinner without an eye to the reformation of society. In short, he was a prig of the first water; self-conscious to the last degree; and so crammed with little moral aphorisms that they drop out of his mouth whenever he opens his lips. And then his religion is in admirable keeping. It is intimately connected with the excellence of his deportment; and is, in fact, merely the application of the laws of good society to the loftiest sphere of human duty. He pays his second compliments to his lady, and his first to the object of his adoration. He very properly gives the precedence to the being he professes to adore—but it is only a precedence. As he carries his solemnity into the pettiest trifles of life, so he considers religious duties to be simply the most important part of social etiquette. He would shrink from blasphemy even more than from keeping on his hat in the presence of ladies; but the respect which he owes in one case is of the same order with that due in the other; it is only a degree more important.

We feel, indeed, a certain affection for Sir Charles Grandison. He is pompous and ceremonious to an insufferable degree; but there is really some truth in his sister's assertion, that his is the most delicate of human minds; through the cumbrous formalities of his century, there shines a certain quickness and sensibility; he even condescends to be lively after a stately fashion, and to indulge in a little "railing," only guarding himself rather too carefully against unbecoming levity. Indeed, though a man of the world at the present day would be as much astonished at his elaborate manners as at his laced coat and sword, he would admit that Sir Charles was by no means wanting in tact; his talk is weighted with more elaborate formulæ than we care to employ, but it is good vigorous conversation in the main, and, if rather overlaid with sermonizing, can at times be really amusing. His religion is not of a very exalted character; he rises to no sublime heights of emotion, and would simply be puzzled by the fervours or the doubts of a more modern generation. In short, it seems to be compounded of common sense, and a regard for decorum—and those are not bad things in their way, though not the highest. He is not a very ardent reformer; he doubts whether the poor should be taught to read, and is very clear that every one should be made to know his station; but still he talks with sense and moderation, and even gets so far as to suggest the necessity of reformatories. He is not very romantic, and displays an amount of self-command in judicially settling the claims of the various ladies who are anxious to marry him, which is almost comic; he is perfectly ready to marry the Italian lady, if she can surmount her religious scruples, though he is in love with Miss Byron; and his mind is evidently in a pleasing state of equilibrium, so that he will be happy with either dear charmer. Indeed, for so chivalric a gentleman, his view of love and marriage is far less enthusiastic than we should now require. One of his benevolent actions, which throws all his admirers into fits of eulogy, is to provide one of his uncles with a wife. The gentleman is a peer, but has hitherto been of disreputable life. The lady, though of good family and education, is above thirty, and her family have lost their estate. The match of convenience which Sir Charles patches up between them, has obvious prudential recommendations; and of course it turns out admirably. But one is rather puzzled to know what special merit Sir Charles can claim for bringing it to pass.

Such a hero as this may be worthy and respectable, but is not a very exalted ideal. Neither do his circumstances increase our interest. It would be rather a curious subject of inquiry why it should be so impossible to make a virtuous hero interesting in fiction. In real life, the men who do heroic actions are certainly more attractive than the villains. Domestic affection, patriotism, piety, and other good qualities are pleasant to contemplate in the world; why should they be so often an unspeakable bore in novels? Principally, no doubt, because our conception of a perfect man is apt to bring the negative qualities into too great prominence; we are asked to admire men because they have not passions—not because

they overcome them. But there are further difficulties ; for example, in a novel it is generally so easy to see what is wrong and what is right, the right-hand path branches off so decidedly from the left, that we give a man little credit for making the proper choice. Still more it is difficult to let us sufficiently into a man's interior, to let us see the struggle and the self-sacrifice which ought to stir our sympathies. We witness the victories, but it is hard to make us feel the cost at which they are won. Now Richardson has, as we shall directly remark, overcome this difficulty to a great extent in *Clarissa* ; but in *Sir Charles Grandison* he has entirely shirked it ; he has made everything too plain and easy for his hero. "I think I could be a good woman," says *Becky Sharp*, "if I had five thousand a year,"—and the history of *Sir Charles Grandison* might have suggested the remark. To be young, handsome, healthy, active, with a fine estate, and a grand oldhouse ; to be able, by your eloquence, to send a sinner into a fit (as *Sir Charles* does once) ; to be the object of a devoted passion from three or four amiable, accomplished, and beautiful women—each of whom has a fine fortune, and only begs you to throw your hand-kerchief towards her, whilst she promises to bear no grudge if you throw it to her neighbour—all these are favourable conditions for virtue—especially if you mean the virtues of being hospitable, generous, a good landlord and husband, and in every walk of life thoroughly gentlemanlike in your behaviour. But the whole design is rather too much in accordance with the device of enabling *Sir Charles* to avoid duels by having a marvellous trick of disarming his adversaries. "What on earth is the use of my fighting with you," says *King Padella* to *Prince Giglio*, "if you have got a fairy sword and a fairy horse ?" And what merit is there in winning the battle of life, when you have every single circumstance in your favour ? Poor old broken-down *Colonel Newcome* in the *Greyfriars*, appeals with infinitely more force to our sympathies, than this prosperous young *Sir Charles*, rich with every gift the gods can give him, and of whom the most we can say is, that the possession of all those gifts, if it has made him rather pompous and self-conscious, has not made him close-fisted or hard-hearted. *Sir Charles* then represents a rather carnal ideal ; he suggests to us those well-fed, almost beefy, and corpulent angels, whom the cotemporary school of painters sometimes portray. No doubt they are angels, for they have wings and are seated in the clouds ; but there is nothing ethereal in their whole nature. We have no love for asceticism ; but a few hours on the column of *St. Simon Stylites*, or a temporary diet of locusts and wild honey, might have purified *Sir Charles's* exuberant self-satisfaction. For all this, he is not without a certain solid merit, and the persons by whom he is surrounded—on whom we have not space to dwell—have a large share of the vivacity which abounds in the real men and women of their time. Their talk may not be equal to that in *Boswell's Johnson* ; but it is animated and amusing, and they compose a gallery of portraits, which would look well in a solid red-brick mansion of the Georgian era.

We must, however, leave Sir Charles, to say a few words upon that which is Richardson's real masterpiece, and which, in spite of a full share of the defects we have noticed in *Grandison*, will always command the admiration of persons who have courage enough to get through eight volumes of correspondence. The characters of the little world in which the reader will pass his time, are in some cases the same who reappear in *Grandison*. The lively Lady G. in the last, is merely a new version of Miss Howe in the former. Clarissa herself is Miss Byron under altered circumstances, and receives from her friends the same shower of superlatives, whenever they have occasion to touch upon her merits. Richardson's ideal lady is not at first sight more prepossessing than his gentleman. After Clarissa's death, her friend Miss Howe writes a glowing panegyric on her character. It will be enough to give the distribution of her time. To rest it seems she allotted six hours only. Her first three morning hours were devoted to study and to writing those terribly voluminous letters which, as one would have thought, must have consumed a still longer period. Two hours more were given to domestic management, for, as Miss Howe explains, "she was a perfect mistress of the four principal rules of arithmetic." Five hours were spent in music, drawing, and needlework, this last especially, and in conversation with the venerable parson of the parish. Two hours she devoted to breakfast and dinner, and as it was hard to restrict herself to this allowance, she occasionally gave one hour more to dinner-time conversation. One hour more was spent in visiting the neighbouring poor, and the remaining four hours to supper and conversation. These periods, it seems, were not fixed for every day; for she kept a kind of running account, and permitted herself to have an occasional holiday by drawing upon the reserved fund of the four hours for supper.

Setting aside the fearfully systematic nature of this arrangement,—the stern determination to live by rule and system,—it must be admitted that Miss Harlowe was what is called by ladies a very "superior" person. She would have made an excellent housekeeper, or even a respectable governess. We feel a certain gratitude to her for devoting four hours to supper; and, indeed, Richardson's characters are always well cared for in the victualling department. They always take their solid three meals, with a liberal intercalation of dishes of tea and chocolate. Miss Harlowe, we must add, knew Latin, although her quotations of classical authors are generally taken from translations. Her successor, Miss Byron, was not allowed this accomplishment, Richardson's doubts of its suitability to ladies having apparently gathered strength in the interval. Notwithstanding this one audacious excursion into the regions of manly knowledge, Miss Harlowe appears to us as, in the main, a healthy, sensible country girl of the period, with sound sense, the highest respect for decorum, and an exaggerated regard for constituted, especially paternal, authority. We cannot expect, from her, any of the outbreaks against the laws of society customary with George Eliot's heroines. If she had changed places with Maggie Tulliver, she would have accepted

the society of the *Mill on the Floss* with perfect contentment, respected all the family of aunts and uncles, and never repined against the tyranny of her brother Tom. She would have been conscious of no vague imaginative yearnings, nor have beaten herself against the narrow bars of stolid custom. She would have laid up a vast store of linen, and walked thankfully in the path chalked out for her. Certainly she would never have run away with Mr. Stephen Guest without tyranny of a much more tangible kind than that which acts only through the finer spiritual tissues. When Clarissa went off with Lovelace it was not because she had unsatisfied aspirations after a higher order of life, but because she had been locked up in her room, as a solitary prisoner, and her family had tried to force her into marriage with a man whom she had excellent reasons for hating and despising.

Yet the long tragedy in which Clarissa is the victim is not the less affecting because the torments are of an intelligible kind, and require no highly-strung sensibility to give them keenness. The heroine is first bullied and then deserted by her family, cut off from the friends who have a desire to help her, and handed over to the power of an unscrupulous libertine. When she dies of a broken heart, the most callous and prosaic of readers must feel that it is the only release possible for her. And in the gradual development of his plot, the slow accumulation of horrors upon the head of a virtuous victim, Richardson shows the power which places him in the front rank of novelists, and finds precisely the field in which his method is most effective and its drawbacks least annoying. In the first place, in spite of his enormous prolixity, the interest is throughout concentrated upon one figure. In *Sir Charles Grandison* there are episodes meant to illustrate the virtues of the "next-to-divine man" which have nothing to do with the main narrative. In *Clarissa* every subordinate plot,—and they abound,—bears immediately upon the central action of the story, and produces a constant alternation of hope and foreboding. The last volumes, indeed, are dragged out in a way which is injurious in several respects. Clarissa, to use Lord Chesterfield's expression about himself, takes an unconscionable time about dying. But until the climax is reached, we see the clouds steadily gathering, and yet with an increasing hope that they may be suddenly cleared up. The only English novel which produces a similar effect, and impresses us with the sense of an inexorable fate, slowly but steadily approaching, is the *Bride of Lammermoor*—in some respects the best and most artistic of Scott's novels. Superior as is Scott's art in certain directions, we scarcely feel the same interest in his chief characters, though there is the same unity of construction. We cannot feel for the Master of Ravenswood the sympathy which Clarissa extorts. For in Clarissa's profound distress we lose sight of the narrow round of respectabilities in which her earlier life is passed; the petty pomposness, the intense propriety which annoy us in *Sir Charles Grandison* disappear or become pathetic. When people are

dying of broken hearts, we forget their little absurdities of costume. A more powerful note is sounded, and the little superficial absurdities are forgotten. We laugh at the first feminine description of her dress—a Brussels-lace cap, with sky-blue ribbon, pale crimson coloured paduasoy, with cuffs embroidered in a running pattern of violets and their leaves; but we are more disposed to cry (if many novels have not exhausted all our powers of weeping) when we come to the final scene. “One faded cheek rested upon the good woman’s bosom, the kindly warmth of which had overspread it with a faint but charming flush; the other paler and hollow, as if already iced over by death. Her hands, white as the lily, with her meandering veins more transparently blue than ever I had seen even hers, hanging lifelessly, one before her, the other grasped by the right hand of the kindly widow, whose tears bedewed the sweet face which her motherly bosom supported, though unfelt by the fair sleeper; and either insensibly to the good woman, or what she would not disturb her to wipe off or to change her posture. Her aspect was sweetly calm and serene; and though she started now and then, yet her sleep seemed easy; her breath indeed short and quick, but tolerably free, and not like that of a dying person.” Allowing for the queer grammar, this is surely a touching and simple picture, and suggests the existence of some true appreciation of nature even in that age of buckram and padding. The epistolary method, though it has its dangers, lends itself well to heighten our interest. Where the object is rather to appeal to our sympathies than to give elaborate analyses of character, or complicated narratives of incident, it is as well to let the persons speak for themselves. A hero cannot conveniently say, like Sir Charles Grandison, “See how virtuous and brave and modest I am;” nor is it easy to make a story clear when it has to be broken up and distributed amongst people speaking from different points of view; it is hard to make the testimonies of the different witnesses fit into each other neatly. But a cry of agony can come from no other quarter so effectively as from the sufferer’s own mouth. *Clarissa Harlowe* is in fact one long lamentation, passing gradually from a tone of indignant complaint to one of despair, and rising at the end to Christian resignation. So prolonged a performance in every key of human misery is indeed painful from its monotony; and we may admit that a limited selection from the correspondence, passing through more rapid gradations, would be more effective. We might be spared some of the elaborate speculations upon various phases of the affair which pass away without any permanent effect. Richardson seems to be scarcely content even with drawing his characters as large as life; he wishes to apply a magnifying-glass. Yet, even in this incessant repetition there is a certain element of power. We are forced to drain every drop in the cup, and to appreciate every ingredient which adds bitterness to its flavour. We are annoyed and wearied at times; but as we read we not only wonder at the number of variations performed upon one tune, but feel that he has succeeded in thoroughly forcing upon our minds, by incessant hammering,

the impression which he desires to produce. If the blows are not all very powerful, each blow tells. There is something impressive in the intensity of purpose which keeps one end in view through so elaborate a process, and the skill which forms such a multitudinous variety of parts into one artistic whole. The proportions of this gigantic growth are preserved with a skill which would be singular even in the normal scale; a respect in which most giants, whether human or literary, are apt to break down.

To make the story complete, the plot should have been as effectively conceived as Clarissa herself, and the other characters should be equally worthy of their position. Here there are certain drawbacks. The plot, it might easily be shown, is utterly incredible. Richardson has the greatest difficulty in preventing his heroine from escaping, and at times we must not look too closely for fear of detecting the flimsy nature of her imaginary chains. There is, indeed, no reason for looking closely; so long as the situations bring out the desired sentiment, we may accept them for the nonce, without asking whether they could possibly have occurred. It is of more importance to judge of the consistency of the chief agent in the persecution. Lovelace is by far the most ambitious character that Richardson has attempted. To heap together a mass of virtues, and christen the result Clarissa Harlowe or Charles Grandison, is comparatively easy; but it is a harder task to compose a villain, who shall be by nature a devil, and yet capable of imposing upon an angel. Some of Richardson's judicious critics declared that he must have been himself a man of vicious life or he could never have described a libertine so vividly. This is one of the smart sayings which are obviously the proper thing to say, but which, notwithstanding, are little better than silly. Lovelace is evidently a fancy character—if we may use the expression. He bears not a single mark of being painted from life, and is formed by the simple process of putting together the most brilliant qualities which his creator could devise to meet the occasion. We do not say that the result is psychologically impossible; for it would be very rash to dogmatize on any such question. No one can say what strange amalgams of virtue and vice may have sufficient stability to hold together during a journey through this world. But it is plain that Lovelace is not a result of observation, but an almost fantastic mixture of qualities intended to fit him for the difficult part he has to play. To exalt Clarissa, for example, Lovelace's family are represented as all along earnestly desirous of a marriage between them; and Lovelace has every conceivable motive, including the desire to avoid hanging, for agreeing to the match. His refusal is unintelligible, and Richardson has to supply him with a reason so absurd and so diabolical that we cannot believe in it; it reminds us of Hamlet's objecting to killing his uncle whilst at prayers, on the ground that it would be sending him straight to heaven. But we may, if we please, consider Hamlet's conceit as a mere pretext invented to excuse his irresolution to himself: whereas Lovelace speculates so long and so seriously upon the marriage, that we are bound to consider his farfetched

arguments as sincere. And the supposition makes his wickedness gratuitous, if we believe in his sanity. Lovelace suffers, again, from the same necessity which injures Sir Charles Grandison ; as the virtuous hero has to be always expatiating on his own virtues, the vicious hero has to boast of his own vices ; it is true that this is, in an artistic sense, the least repulsive habit of the two ; for it gives reason for hating not a hero but a villain ; unluckily it is also a reason for refusing to believe in his existence. The improbability of a thorough-paced scoundrel writing daily elaborate confessions of his criminality to a friend, even when the friend condemns him, and expatiating upon atrocities that deserved hanging, justifying his vices on principle, is rather too glaring to be admissible. And by another odd inconsistency, Lovelace is described as being all the time a steady believer in eternal punishment and a rebuker of sceptics—Richardson being apparently of opinion that infidelity would be too bad to be introduced upon the stage, though a vice might be described in detail. A man who has broken through all moral laws might be allowed a little freethinking. We might add that Lovelace, in spite of the cleverness attributed to him, is really a most imbecile schemer ; the first principle of a villain should be to tell as few lies as will serve his purpose ; but Lovelace invents such elaborate and complicated plots, presenting so many chances of detection and introducing so many persons into his secrets, that it is evident that in real life he would have broken down in a week.

Granting the high improbability of Lovelace as a real living human being, it must be admitted that he has every merit but that of existence. The letters which he writes are the most animated in the voluminous correspondence. The respectable domestic old printer, who boasted of the perfect purity of his own life, seems to have thrown himself with special gusto into the character of a heartless reprobate. He must have felt a certain piquancy in writing down the most atrocious sentiments in his own respectable parlour. He would show that the quiet humdrum old tradesman could be on paper as sprightly and audacious as the most profligate man about town. As quiet people are apt to do, he probably exaggerated the enormities which such men would openly avow ; he fancied that the world beyond his little circle was a wilderness of wild beasts who could gnash their teeth and show their claws after a terribly ostentatious fashion in their own dens ; they doubtless gloated upon all the innocent sheep whom they had devoured without any shadow of reticence. And he had a fancy that, in their way, they were amusing monsters too ; Lovelace is a lady's villain as Grandison is a lady's hero ; he is designed by a person inexperienced even in the observation of vice. Indeed, he would exaggerate the charm a good deal more than the atrocity. We must also admit that when the old printer was put upon his mettle he could be very lively indeed. Lovelace, like everybody else, is at times unmercifully profix ; he never leaves us to guess any detail for ourselves ; but he is spirited, eloquent, and a thoroughly fine gentleman after the

Chesterfield type. Richardson lectures us very seriously on the evil results which are sure to follow bad courses ; but he evidently holds in his heart, that, till the Nemesis descends, the libertines are far the most amusing part of the world. In Sir Charles Grandison's company, we should be treated to an intolerable deal of sermonizing, with an occasional descent into the regions of humour—but the humour is always admitted under protest. With Lovelace we might hear some very questionable morality, but there would be a never-ceasing flow of sparkling witticisms. The devil's advocate has the laugh distinctly on his side, whatever may be said of the argument. Finally, we may say that Lovelace, if too obviously constructed to work the plot, certainly works it well. When we coolly dissect him and ask whether he could ever have existed, we may be forced to reply in the negative. But whilst we read we forget to criticize ; he seems to possess more vitality than most living men ; he is so full of eloquent brag, and audacious sophistry, and unblushing impudence, that he fascinates us as he is supposed to have bewildered Clarissa. The dragon who is to devour the maiden comes with all the flash and glitter and overpowering whirl of wings that can be desired. He seems to be irresistible—we admire him and hate him, and some time elapses before we begin to suspect that he is merely a stage dragon, and not one of those who really walk this earth.

To sum up, then, the results of our analysis, it seems clear that Richardson was a man of true genius ; and we can distinguish the points of analogy between him and the French school, at first sight so distinct in their method, and who yet express so warm an admiration for his talents. His defects are obvious, and in large degree due to his era. He knows, for example, nothing of the influence of Nature. There is scarcely throughout his books one description showing the power of appealing to emotions through scenery claimed by every modern scribbler. In passing the Alps, the only remark which one of his characters has to make, beyond describing the horrible dangers of the Mont Cenis, is that “every object which here presents itself is excessively miserable.” His ideal scenery is a “large and convenient country-house, situated in a spacious park,” with plenty of “fine prospects,” which you are expected to view from a “neat but plain villa, built in the rustic taste.” And his views of morality are as contracted as his taste in landscapes. The most distinctive article of his creed is that children should have a reverence for their parents, which would be exaggerated in the slave of an Eastern despot. We can pardon Clarissa for refusing to die happy until her stupid and ill-tempered old father has revoked a curse which he bestowed upon her. But we cannot quite excuse Sir Charles Grandison for writing in this fashion to his disreputable old parent, who has asked his consent to a certain family arrangement in which he had a legal right to be consulted.

“As for myself,” he says, “I cannot have one objection ; but what am I in this case ? My sister is wholly my father's ; I also am his. The consideration he gives me in this instance, confounds me. It binds me to

him in double duty. It would look like taking advantage of it, were I so much as to offer my humble opinion, unless he were pleased to command it from me."

Even one of Richardson's abject lady-correspondents was revolted by this exaggerated servility. But narrow as his vision might be in some directions, his genius is not the less genuine. He is a curious example of the power which a real artistic insight may exhibit under the most disadvantageous forms. To realise his characteristic power, we should take one of the great French novelists whom we admire for the exquisite proportions of his story, the unity of the interest and the skill—so unlike our common English clumsiness—with which all details are duly subordinated. He should have, too, the comparative weakness of French novelists, a defective perception of character, a certain unwillingness in art as in politics to allow individual peculiarities to interfere with the main flow of events; for, admitting the great excellence of his minor performers, Richardson's most elaborately designed characters are so artificial that they derive their interest from the events in which they play their parts, rather than give interest to them—little as he may have intended it. Then we must cause our imaginary Frenchman to transmigrate into the body of a small, plump, weakly printer of the eighteenth century. We may leave him a fair share of his vivacity, though considerably narrowing his views of life and morality; but we must surround him with a court of silly women whose incessant flatteries must generate in him an unnatural propensity to twaddle. All the gossiping propensities of his nature will grow to unhealthy luxuriance under this unnatural stimulant, and the fine edge of his wit will be somewhat dulled in the process. He will thus become capable of being a bore—a thing which is impossible to any unsophisticated Frenchman. In this way we might obtain a literary product so anomalous in appearance as *Clarissa*—a story in which a most affecting situation is drawn with extreme power, and yet so overlaid with twaddle, so unmercifully protracted and spun out as to be almost unreadable to the present generation. But to complete Richardson, we must inoculate him with the propensities of another school: we must give him a liberal share of the feminine sensitiveness and closeness of observation of which Miss Austen is the great example. And perhaps, to fill in the last details he ought, in addition, to have a dash of the more unctuous and offensive variety of the dissenting preacher—for we know not where else to look for the astonishing and often ungrammatical fluency by which he is possessed, and which makes his best passages remind us of the marvellous malleability of some precious metals.

The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CASTELLO.



ASTELLO had now become a very dreary abode. Lord and Lady Culduff had taken their departure for Paris. Temple had gone up to town to try and manage an exchange, if by good luck any one could be found to believe that Bogotá was a desirable residence, and a fine field for budding diplomacies ; and none remained but Nelly and Augustus to relieve each other in watches beside their father's sick-bed.

Young and little experienced in life as she was, Nelly proved a great comfort and support to her brother in these trying hours. At first he told her nothing of the doubts and fears that beset him. In fact they had assumed no shape sufficiently palpable to convey.

It was his daily custom to go over the letters that each morning brought, and in a few words—the very fewest he could employ—acquaint Mr. Underwood, the junior partner, of his father's precarious state, and protest against being able in the slightest degree to offer any views or guidance as to the conduct of matters of business. These would now and then bring replies in a tone that showed how little Underwood himself was acquainted with many of the transactions of the house, and how completely he was accustomed to submit himself to Colonel Bramleigh's guidance. Even in his affected retirement from business Bramleigh had not withdrawn from the direction of the weightiest of the matters which regarded the firm, and jealously refused any—the slightest—attempt of his partner to influence his judgment.

One of Underwood's letters completely puzzled Augustus : not only by the obscurity of its wording, but by the evident trace in it of the writer's own inability to explain his meaning. There was a passage which ran thus :—"Mr. Sedley was down again, and this time the amount is two



"MY LORD, YOU ARE A MODEL OF COURTESY."

thousand five hundred, and though I begged he would give me time to communicate with you before handing so weighty a draft, he replied—I take pains to record his exact words:—‘There is no time for this; I shall think myself very fortunate, and deem Colonel Braxleigh more fortunate still, if I am not forced to call upon you for four times as much within a fortnight.’” After referring to other matters, there was this at the end of the letter,—“S—— has just repaid the amount he so lately drew in the bank;—he appeared chagrined and out of spirits, merely saying, ‘Tell the Colonel the negotiation has broke down, and that I will write to-morrow.’”

The promised letter from Sedley had not come, but in its place was a telegram, saying, “I find I must see and speak with you; I shall go over by Saturday, and be with you on Sunday morning.”

“Of course he cannot see papa,” said Nelly; “the doctor more strongly than ever insists on perfect repose.”

“And it’s little worth his while to make the journey to see us,” said he dispiritedly.

“Perhaps he only wants your sanction, your concurrence, to something he thinks it wise to do,—who knows?”

“Just so, Nelly; who knows? All these weighty speculations entered into to convert thousands into tens of thousands have no sympathy of mine. I see no object in such wealth. The accumulation of what never spares one a moment for its enjoyment, seems to me as foolish as the man who would pass his life scaling a mountain to obtain a view, and drop down of fatigue before he had once enjoyed it. You and I, I take it, would be satisfied with far humbler fortune?”

“You and I, Gusty,” said she, laughingly, “are the ignoble members of this family.”

“Then here comes another difficulty; Sedley will at once see that I have not shared my father’s confidence, and he will be very cautious about telling me of matters which have not been entrusted to me already.”

“Perhaps we are only worrying ourselves for nothing, Gusty. Perhaps there are no secrets after all; or at worst, only those trade secrets which are great mysteries in the counting-house, but have no interest for any not deep in speculation.”

“If I only thought so!”

“Have you sufficient confidence in Mr. Cribbill to take him into your counsel? he will be back here to-morrow.”

“Scarcely, Nelly. I do not exactly distrust,—but I can’t say that I like him.”

“I hated him at first, but either I have got used to his vulgarit, or I fancy that he is really good-natured, or, from whatever the cause, I incline to like him better than when he came, and certainly he behaved well to poor Jack.”

“Ah, there’s another trouble that I have not thought of. Jack, who does not appear to know how ill my poor father is, asks if he could not be induced to write to—somebody,—I forgot whom, in his behalf. In fact,

Nelly, there is not a corner without its special difficulty, and I verily believe there never was a man less made to meet them than myself."

"I'll take as much of the load as I have strength for," said she, quietly.

"I know that; I know it well, Nelly. I can scarcely say what I'd do without you now. Here comes the doctor. I'm very anxious to hear what he'll say this evening."

Belton had made a long visit to the sick-room, and his look was graver than usual as he came down the stairs. "His head is full of business; he will give his brain no respite," said he; "but for that, I'd not call his case hopeless. Would it not be possible to let him suppose that all the important matters which weigh upon him were in safe hands and in good guidance?"

Augustus shook his head doubtfully

"At least could he not be persuaded to suffer some one—yourself, for instance—to take the control of such affairs as require prompt action till such time as he may be able to resume their management himself?"

"I doubt it, doctor; I doubt it much. Men who, like my father, have had to deal with vast and weighty interests, grow to feel that inexperienced people—of my own stamp, for instance—are but sorry substitutes in time of difficulty; and I have more than once heard him say, 'I'd rather lash the tiller and go below, than give over the helm to a bad steersman.'"

"I would begin," continued the doctor, "by forbidding him all access to his letters. You must have seen how nervous and excited he becomes as the hour of the post draws nigh. I think I shall take this responsibility on myself."

"I wish you would."

"He has given me in some degree the opportunity, for he has already asked when he might have strength enough to dictate a letter, and I have replied that I would be guided by the state in which I may find him to-morrow for the answer. My impression is that what he calls a letter is in reality a will. Are you aware whether he has yet made one?"

"I know nothing, absolutely nothing, of my father's affairs."

"The next twelve hours will decide much," said the doctor, as he moved away, and Augustus sat pondering alone over what he had said, and trying to work out in his mind whether his father's secrets involved anything deeper and more serious than the complications of business and the knotty combinations of weighty affairs.

Wearyed out—for he had been up the greater part of the night—and fatigued, he fell off at last into a heavy sleep, from which he was awoke by Nelly, who, gently leaning on his shoulder, whispered, "Mr. Sedley has come, Gusty; he is at supper in the oak-parlour. I told him I thought you had gone to lie down for an hour, for I knew you were tired."

"No, not tired, Nelly," said he, arousing himself, half-ashamed of being caught asleep. "I came in here to think, and I believe I dropped into a doze. What is he like, this Mr. Sedley? What manner of man is he?"

"He is small and grey, with a slight stoop, and a formal sort of

manner. I don't like him. I mean his manner checked and repelled me, and I was glad to get away from him."

"My father thinks highly of his integrity, I know."

"Yes, I am aware of that. He is an excellent person, I believe; rather non-attractive."

"Well," said he, with a half-sigh, "I'll go and see whether my impression of him be the same as yours. Will you come in, Nelly?"

"Not unless you particularly wish it," said she, gravely.

"No; I make no point of it, Nelly. I'll see you again by-and-by."

Augustus found Mr. Sedley over his wine. He had despatched a hasty meal, and was engaged looking over a mass of papers and letters with which a black leather-bag at his side seemed to be filled. After a few words of greeting, received by the visitor with a formal politeness, Augustus proceeded to explain how his father's state precluded all questions of business, and that the injunctions of the doctor were positive on this head.

"His mind is clear, however, isn't it?" asked Sedley.

"Perfectly. He has never wandered, except in the few moments after sleep."

"I take it, I shall be permitted to see him?"

"Certainly; if the doctor makes no objection, you shall."

"And possibly, too, I may be allowed to ask him a question or two? Matters which I know he will be well prepared to answer me."

"I am not so confident about that. Within the last hour Doctor Belton has declared perfect quiet, perfect repose, to be of the utmost importance to my father."

"Is it not possible, Mr. Bramleigh, that I may be able to contribute to this state by setting your father's mind at rest, with reference to what may press very heavily on him?"

"That is more than I can answer," said Augustus, cautiously.

"Well," said Sedley, pushing back his chair from the table, "if I am not permitted to see Colonel Bramleigh, I shall have made this journey for nothing—without, sir, that you will accede to occupy your father's position, and give your sanction to a line of action?"

"You know my father, Mr. Sedley, and I need not tell you how so presumptuous a step on my part might be resented by him."

"Under ordinary circumstances I am sure he would resent such interference, but here, in the present critical emergency, he might feel—and not without reason, perhaps,—displeased at your want of decision."

"But when I tell you, Mr. Sedley, that I know nothing of business, that I know no more of the share list than I do of Sanscrit, that I never followed the rise and fall of the funds, and am as ignorant of what influences the exchanges as I am of what affects the tides; when I have told you all this, you will, I am sure, see that any opinion of mine must be utterly valueless."

"I don't exactly know, Mr. Bramleigh, that I'd have selected you if I wanted a guide to a great speculation or a large investment; but the

business which has brought me down here is not of this nature. It is besides a question as to which, in the common course of events, you might be obliged to determine what line you would adopt. After your father, you are the head of this family, and I think it is time you should learn that you may be called upon to-morrow or next day to defend your right, not only to your property, but to your name."

"For heaven's sake, what do you mean?"

"Be calm, sir, and grant me a patient hearing, and you shall hear the subject on which I have come to obtain your father's opinion, and failing that, yours—for, as I have said, Mr. Bramleigh, a day or two more may make the case one for your own decision. And now, without entering into the history of the affair, I will simply say that an old claim against your father's entailed estates has been recently revived, and under circumstances of increased importance; that I have been for some time back in negotiation to arrange this matter by a compromise, and with every hope of success; but that the negotiations have been unexpectedly broken off by the demands of the claimant—demands so far above all calculation, and indeed I may say above all fairness—that I have come over to ask whether your father will accede to them or accept the issue of the law as to his right."

Augustus sat like one stunned by a heavy blow, not utterly unconscious, but so much overcome and so confused that he could not venture to utter a word.

"I see I have shocked you by my news, Mr. Bramleigh, but these are things not to be told by halves."

"I know nothing of all this; I never so much as heard of it," gasped out Augustus. "Tell me all that you know about it."

"That would be a somewhat long story," said the other, smiling, "but I can, in a short space, tell you enough to put the main facts before you, and enable you to see that the case is, with all its difficulties of proof, a very weighty and serious one, and not to be dismissed, as your father once opined, as the mere menace of a needy adventurer."

With as much brevity as the narrative permitted, Sedley told the story of Pracontal's claim. It was, he said, an old demand revived; but under circumstances that showed that the claimant had won over adherents to his cause, and that some men with means to bring the case to trial had espoused his side. Pracontal's father, added he, was easily dealt with; he was a vulgar fellow, of dissipated habits and wasteful ways; but his taste for plot and intrigue—very serious conspiracies too at times—had so much involved him that he was seldom able to show himself, and could only resort to letter-writing to press his demands. In fact, it was always his lot to be in hiding on this charge or that, and the police of half Europe were eager in pursuit of him. With a man so deeply compromised, almost outlawed over the whole Continent, it was not difficult to treat, and it happened more than once that he was for years without anything being heard of him; and, in fact, it was clear that he only preferred his claim

as a means of raising a little money, when all other means of obtaining supplies had failed him. At last, news of his death arrived—he died at Monte Video—and it was believed that he had never married, and consequently that his claim, if it deserved such a name, died with him. It was only three years ago, that the demand was revived, and this man, M. Anatole Pracontal as he called himself, using his maternal name, appeared in the field as the rightful owner of the Bramleigh estates.

"Now this man is a very different sort of person from his father. He has been well educated, mixed much with the world, and has the manners and bearing of a gentleman. I have not been able to learn much of his career; but I know that he served as a lieutenant in a French hussar regiment, and subsequently held some sort of employment in Egypt. He has never stooped to employ threat or menace, but frankly appealed to the law to establish his claim, and his solicitor, Kelson, of Furnival's Inn, is one of the most respectable men in the profession."

"You have seen this Monsieur Pracontal yourself?"

"Yes. By a strange accident, I met him at your brother's, Captain Bramleigh's, breakfast-table. They had been fellow-travellers, without the slightest suspicion on either side how eventful such a meeting might be. Your brother, of course, could know nothing of Pracontal's pretensions; but Pracontal, when he came to know with whom he had been travelling, must have questioned himself closely as to what might have dropped from him inadvertently."

Augustus leaned his head on his hand in deep thought, and for several minutes was silent. At last he said,—"Give me your own opinion, Mr. Sedley—I don't mean your opinion as a lawyer, relying on nice technical questions or minute points of law, but simply your judgment as a man of sound sense, and, above all, of such integrity as I know you to possess—and tell me what do you think of this claim? Is it—in one word, is it founded on right?"

"You are asking too much of me, Mr. Bramleigh. First of all, you ask me to disassociate myself from all the habits and instincts of my daily life, and give you an opinion on a matter of law, based on other rules of evidence than those which alone I suffer myself to be guided by. I only recognise one kind of right, that which the law declares and decrees."

"Is there not such a thing as a moral right?"

"There may be; but we are disputatious enough in this world, with all our artificial aids to some fixity of judgment, and for heaven's sake let us not soar up to the realms of morality for our decisions, or we shall bid adieu to agreement for ever."

"I'm not of your mind there, sir. I think it is quite possible to conceive a case in which there could be no doubt on which side lay the right, and not difficult to believe that there are men who would act, on conviction, to their own certain detriment."

"It's a very hopeful view of humanity, Mr. Bramleigh," said the lawyer, and he took a pinch of snuff.

"I am certain it is a just one. At least, I will go this far to sustain my opinion. I will declare to you here, that if the time should ever come that it may depend upon me to decide this matter, if I satisfy my mind that M. Pracontal's claim be just and equitable—that, in fact, he is simply asking for his own—I'll not screen myself behind the law's delays or its niceties; I'll not make it a question of the longest purse or the ablest advocate, but frankly admit that the property is his, and cede it to him."

"I have only one remark to make, Mr. Bramleigh, which is, Keep this determination strictly to yourself, and, above all things, do not acquaint Colonel Bramleigh with these opinions."

"I suspect that my father is not a stranger to them," said Augustus, reddening with shame and irritation together.

"It is therefore as well, sir, that there is no question of a compromise to lay before you. You are for strict justice and no favour."

"I repeat, Mr. Sedley, I am for him who has the right."

"So am I," quickly responded Sedley; "and we alone differ about the meaning of that word; but let me ask another question. Are you aware that this claim extends to nearly everything you have in the world; that the interest alone on the debt would certainly swallow up all your funded property, and make a great inroad besides on your securities and foreign bonds?"

"I can well believe it," said the other, mournfully.

"I must say, sir," said Sedley, as he rose and proceeded to thrust the papers hurriedly into his bag, "that though I am highly impressed—very highly impressed, indeed, with the noble sentiments you have delivered on this occasion—sentiments, I am bound to admit, that a long professional career has never made me acquainted with till this day—yet, on the whole, Mr. Bramleigh, looking at the question with a view to its remote consequences, and speculating on what would result if such opinions as yours were to meet a general acceptance, I am bound to say I prefer the verdict of twelve men in a jury-box to the most impartial judgment of any individual breathing; and I wish you a very good-night."

What Mr. Sedley muttered to himself as he ascended the stairs, in what spirit he canvassed the character of Mr. Augustus Bramleigh, the reader need not know; and it is fully as well that our story does not require it should be recorded. One only remark, however, may be preserved: it was said as he reached the door of his room, and apparently in a sort of summing up of all that had occurred to him,—“These creatures, with their cant about conscience, don't seem to know that this mischievous folly would unsettle half the estates in the island; and there's not a man in England would know what he was born to till he had got his father in a madhouse.”

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE HÔTEL BRISTOL.

In a handsome apartment of the Hôtel Bristol at Paris sat Lord and Lady Culduff, at tea. They were in deep mourning; and though they were perfectly alone, the room was splendidly lighted,—branches of candles figuring on every console, and the glass lustre that hung from the ceiling a blaze of waxlights.

If Lord Culduff looked older and more careworn than we have lately seen him, Marion seemed in higher bloom and beauty, and the haughty, half-defiant air which had, in a measure, spoiled the charm of her girlhood, sat with a sort of dignity on her features as a woman.

Not a word was spoken on either side; and from her look of intense preoccupation, as she sat gazing on the broad hem of her handkerchief, it was evident that her thoughts were wandering far away from the place she was in. As they sat thus, the door was noiselessly opened by a servant in deep black, who, in a very subdued voice, said, "The Duke de Castro, your Excellency."

"I don't receive," was the cold reply, and the man withdrew. In about a quarter of an hour after he reappeared, and in the same stealthy tone said, "Madame la Comtesse de Renneville begs she may have the honour——"

"Lady Culduff does not receive," said his lordship sternly.

"The countess has been very kind; she has been here to inquire after me several times."

"She is a woman of intense curiosity," said he slowly.

"I'd have said of great good nature."

"And you'd have said perfectly wrong, madam. The woman is a political 'intriguante,' who only lives to unravel mysteries; and the one that is now puzzling her is too much for her good manners."

"I declare, my lord, that I do not follow you."

"I'm quite sure of that, madam. The sort of address Madame de Renneville boasts was not a quality that your life in Ireland was likely to make you familiar with."

"I'd beg you to remember, my lord," said she, angrily, "that all my experiences of the world have not been derived from that side of the Channel."

"I'm cruel enough to say, madam, that I wish they had! There is nothing so difficult as unlearning."

"I wish, my lord—I heartily wish—that you had made this discovery earlier."

"Madam," said he, slowly, and with much solemnity of manner, "I owe it to each of us to own that I had made what you are pleased to call this 'discovery' while there was yet time to obviate its consequences. My very great admiration had not blinded me as to certain peculiarities,

let me call them, of manner ; and if my vanity induced me to believe that I should be able to correct them, it is my only error."

"I protest, my lord, if my temper sustain me under such insult as this, I think I might be acquitted of ill-breeding."

"I live in the hope, madam, that such a charge would be impossible."

"I suppose you mean," said she, with a sneering smile, "when I have taken more lessons,—when I have completed the course of instruction you so courteously began with me yesterday ?"

"Precisely, madam, precisely. There are no heaven-born courtiers. The graces of manner are as much matter of acquirement as are the notes in music. A delicate organization has the same disadvantage in the one case that a fine ear has in the other. It substitutes an aptitude for what ought to be pure acquirement. The people who are naturally well-mannered are like the people who sing by ear ; and I need not say what an infliction are either."

"And you really think, my lord, that I may yet be able to enter a room and leave it with becoming grace and dignity ?"

"You enter a room well, madam," said he, with a judicial slowness. "Now that you have subdued the triumphant air I objected to and assumed more quietness,—the blended softness with reserve,—your approach is good, I should say, extremely good. To withdraw is, however, far more difficult. To throw into the deference of leave-taking,—for it is always a permission you seem to ask,—the tempered sorrow of departure with the sense of tasted enjoyment, to do this with ease and with elegance, and not a touch of the dramatic about it, is a very high success ; and I grieve to say, madam," added he, seriously, "it is a success not yet accorded you. Would you do me the great favour to repeat our lesson of this morning—I mean the curtsey with the two steps retiring, and then the slide ?"

"If you do not think me well-mannered, my lord, you must at least believe me very good-tempered," said she, flushing.

"Let me assure you, my lady, that to the latter quality I attach no importance whatever. Persons who respect themselves never visit peculiarities of temperament on others. We have our infirmities of nature, as we have our maladies ; but we keep them for ourselves, or for our doctor. It is the triumph of the well-bred world to need nothing but good manners."

"What charming people. I take it that heaven must be peopled with lords-in-waiting."

"Let me observe to your ladyship that there is no greater enormity in manners than an epigram. Keep this smartness for correspondence exclusively, abstain from it strictly in conversation."

"I protest, my lord, your lessons come so thick that I despair of being able to profit by half of them. Meanwhile, if I am not committing another solecism against good manners, I should like to say good-night."

Lord Culdnif arose and walked to the door, to be ready to open it as she approached. Meanwhile, she busied herself collecting her fan and her scent-bottle and her handkerchief, and a book she had been reading.

"Hadn't Virginie better come for these things?" said he, quietly.

"Oh, certainly," replied she, dropping them hurriedly on the table; "I'm always transgressing; but I do hope, my lord, with time, and with that sincere desire to learn that animates me, I may yet attain to at least so many of the habits of your lordship's order as may enable me to escape censure."

He smiled and bowed a courteous concurrence with the wish, but did not speak. Though her lip now trembled with indignation, and her cheek was flushed, she controlled her temper, and as she drew nigh the door dropped a low and most respectful curtsey.

"Very nice, very nice, indeed; a thought, perhaps, too formal,—I mean for the occasion,—but in admirable taste. Your ladyship is grace itself."

"My lord, you are a model of courtesy."

"I cannot even attempt to convey what pleasure your words give me," said he, pressing her hand to his heart and bowing low. Meanwhile, with a darkening brow and a look of haughty defiance, she swept past him and left the room.

"Isn't Marion well?" said Temple Bramleigh, as he entered a few minutes later; "her maid told me she had gone to her room."

"Quite well: a little fagged, perhaps, by a day of visiting; nothing beyond that. You have been dining at the Embassy? Whom had you there?"

"A family party and a few of the smaller diplomacies."

"To be sure. It was Friday. Any news stirring?"

"Nothing whatever."

"Does Bartleton talk of retiring still?"

"Yes. He says he is sick of sending in his demand for retirement. That they always say, 'We can't spare you; you must hold on a little longer. If you go out now, there's Bailey and Hammersmith, and half-a-dozen others will come insisting on advancement.'"

"Didn't he say Culduff too? eh, didn't he?" said the old lord, with a wicked twinkle of the eye.

"I'm not sure he didn't," said Temple, blushing.

"He did, sir, and he said more—he said, Rather than see Culduff here, I'd stay on and serve these twenty years."

"I didn't hear him say that, certainly."

"No, sir, perhaps not, but he said it to himself, as sure as I stand here. There isn't a country in Europe—I say it advisedly—where intellect—I mean superior intellect—is so persistently persecuted as in England. I don't want my enemy to have any heavier misfortune than to be born a man of brains and a Briton! Once that it's known that you stand above your fellow-men, the whole world is arrayed against you. Who knows that better than he who now speaks to you? Have I ever been fngiven the Münster convention? Even George Canning—from whom one might have expected better—even he used to say, 'How well Culduff managed that commercial treaty with the Hanse Towns:' he never

got over it, sir, never! You are a young fellow entering into life—let me give you a word of counsel: Always be inferior to the man you are, for the time being, in contact with. Outbid him, outjockey him, overreach him, but never forget to make him believe he knows more of the game than you do. If you have any success over him, ascribe it to 'luck,' mere 'luck.' The most envious of me will forgive 'luck,' all the more if they despise the fellow who has profited by it. Therefore, I say, if the intellectual standard of your rival is only four feet, take care that with your tallest heels on, you don't stand above three feet eleven! No harm if only three ten and a half."

The little applauding ha! ha! ha! with which his lordship ended, was faintly chorussed by the secretary.

"And what is your news from home; you've had letters, haven't you?"

"Yes. Augustus writes me in great confusion. They have not found the will, and they begin to fear that the very informal scrap of paper I already mentioned is all that represents one."

"What! do you mean that memorandum stating that your father bequeathed all he had to Augustus, and trusted he would make a suitable provision for his brothers and sisters?"

"Yes; that is all that has been found. Augustus says in his last letter, my poor father would seem to have been most painfully affected for some time back by a claim put forward to the title of all his landed property, by a person assuming to be the heir of my grandfather, and this claim is actually about to be asserted at law. The weight of this charge and all its consequent publicity and exposure appear to have crushed him for some months before his death, and he had made great efforts to effect a compromise."

A long, low, plaintive whistle from Lord Culduff arrested Temple's speech, and for a few seconds there was a dead silence in the room.

"This, then, would have left you all ruined—eh?" asked Culduff, after a pause.

"I don't exactly see to what extent we should have been liable,—whether only the estate property, or also all funded monies."

"Everything; every stick and stone; every scription and debenture, you may swear. The rental of the estates for years back would have to be accounted for—with interest."

"Sedley does not say so," said Temple, in a tone of considerable irritation.

"These fellows never do; they always imply there is a game to be played, an issue to be waited for, else their occupation were gone. How much of all this story was known to your sister Marion?"

"Nothing. Neither she nor any of us ever suspected it."

"It's always the same thing," said the viscount, as he arose and settled his wig before the glass. "The same episode goes on repeating itself for ever. These trade fortunes are just card-houses; they are raised in a night, and blown away in the morning."

"You forget, my lord, that my father inherited an entailled estate."

" Which turns out not to have been his," replied he, with a grin.

" You are going too fast, my lord, faster than judge and jury. Sedley never took a very serious view of this claim, and he only concurred in the attempt to compromise it out of deference to my father's dislike to public scandal."

" And a very wise antipathy it was, I must say. No gentleman ever consulted his self-respect by inviting the world to criticize his private affairs. And how does this pleasing incident stand now? In which act of the drama are we at this moment? Is there an action at law or are we in the stage of compromise?"

" This is what Augustus says," said Temple, taking the letter from his pocket and reading: "'Sedley thinks that a handsome offer of a sum down,—say twenty thousand pounds,—might possibly be accepted; but to meet this would require a united effort by all of us. Would Lord Culduff be disposed to accept his share in this liability? Would he, I mean, be willing to devote a portion of Marion's fortune to this object, seeing that he is now one of us? I have engaged Cuthill to go over to Paris and confer with him, and he will probably arrive there by Tuesday. Nelly has placed at my disposal the only sum over which she has exclusive control,—it is but two thousand pounds. As for Jack, matters have gone very ill with him, and rather than accept a court-martial, he has thrown up his commission and left the service. We are expecting him here to-night, but only to say good-by, as he sails for China on Thursday.'"

Lord Culduff walked quietly towards the chimney-piece as Temple concluded, and took up a small tobacco-box of chased silver, from which he proceeded to manufacture a cigarette—a process on which he displayed considerable skill and patience; having lighted which, and taken a couple of puffs, he said, " You'll have to go to Bogotá, Temple, that's clear."

" Go to Bogotá! I declare I don't see why."

" Yes; you'll have to go; every man has to take his turn of some objectionable post, his Gaboon and yellow-fever days. I myself passed a year at Stuttgart. The Bramleighs are now events of the past. There's no use in fighting against these things. They were, and they are not, that's the whole story. It's very hard on every one, especially hard upon me. Reverses in life sit easily enough on the class that furnishes adventurers, but in *my* condition there are no adventurers. You and others like you descend to the ranks, and nobody thinks the worse of you. *We*,—we cannot! that's the pull you have. We are born with our epaulettes, and we must wear them till we die."

" It does not seem a very logical consequence, notwithstanding, to me, that because my brother may have to defend his title to his estate, that I must accept a post that is highly distasteful to me."

" And yet it is the direct consequence. Will you do me the favour to touch that bell. I should like some claret-cup. The fact is, we all of us take too little out of our prosperity! Where we err is, we experiment on good fortune: now we shouldn't do that, we should realize. You for

instance ought to have made your 'running' while your father was entertaining all the world in Belgravia. The people couldn't have ignored *you*, and dined with *him*; at least, you need not have let them."

"So that your lordship already looks upon us, as bygones, as things of the past?"

"I am forced to take this very disagreeable view. Will you try that cup? it is scarcely iced enough for my liking. Have you remarked that they never make cup properly in a hotel? The clubs alone have the secret."

"I suppose you will confer with Cutbill before you return an answer to Augustus?" said Templo stiffly.

"I may—that is, I may listen to what that very plausible but not very polished individual has to say, before I frame the exact terms of my reply. We are all of us, so to say, *dans les mauvais draps*. You are going where you hate to go, and I, who really should have had no share in this general disaster, have taken my ticket in the lottery when the last prize has just been paid over the counter."

"It is very hard on you indeed," said the other scornfully.

"Nothing less than your sympathy would make it endurable," and as he spoke he lighted a bed-room candle and moved towards the door. "Don't tell them at F. O. that you are going out unwillingly, or they'll keep you there. Trust to some irregularity when you are there, to get recalled, and be injured. If a man can only be injured and brought before the House, it's worth ten years' active service to him. The first time I was injured I was made secretary of embassy. The second gave me my K. C. B., and I look to my next misfortune for the Grand Cross. Good-by. Don't take the yellow-fever, don't marry a squaw." And with a graceful move of the hand he motioned an adieu, and disappeared.

CHAPTER XXX.

ON THE ROAD.

L'ESTRANGE and his sister were on their way to Italy. The curate had been appointed to the church at Albano, and he was proceeding to his destination with as much happiness as is permitted to a man who, with a very humble opinion of himself, feels called on to assume a position of some importance.

Wishing, partly from motives of enjoyment, partly from economy, to avoid the route most frequented by travellers, they had taken the road through Zurich and the valley of the upper Rhine, and had now reached the little village of Dornbirn in the Vorarlberg—a spot of singular beauty, in the midst of a completely pastoral country. High mountains, snow-capped above, pine-clad lower down, descended by grassy slopes into rich pasture-lands, traversed by innumerable streams, and dotted over with those cottages of framed wood, which, with their ornamented gables and quaint galleries, are the most picturesque peasant-houses in existence. Beautiful cattle covered the hills, their tinkling bells ringing out in the

clear air, and blending their tones with the ceaseless flow of falling water, imparting just that amount of sound that relieved the solemn character of the scene, and gave it vitality.

Day after day found our two travellers still lingering here. There was a charm in the spot, which each felt, without confessing it to the other, and it was already the fourth evening of their sojourn as they were sitting by the side of a little rivulet, watching the dipping flies along the stream, that Julia said, suddenly,—

“ You'd like to live your life here, George ; isn't that so ? ”

“ What makes you think so, Julia ? ” said he, colouring slightly as he spoke.

“ First tell me if I have not read you aright ? You like this quiet dreamy landscape. You want no other changes than in the varying effects of cloud, and shadow, and mist ; and you'd like to think this a little haven against the storms and shipwrecks of life ? ”

“ And if I really did think all this, would my choice of an existence be a very bad one, Julia ? ”

“ No. Not if one could ensure the same frame of mind in which first he tasted the enjoyment. I, for instance, like what is called the world very much. I like society, life, and gaiety. I like the attentions, I like the flatteries one meets with, but if I could be always as happy, always as tranquil as we have felt since we came here, I'd be quite willing to sign a bond to live and die here.”

“ So that you mean our present enjoyment of the place could not last ? ”

“ I am sure it could not. I am sure a great deal of the pleasure we now feel is in the relief of escaping from the turmoil and bustle of a world that we don't belong to. The first sense of this relief is repose, the next would be ennui.”

“ I don't agree with you, Julia. There is a calm acceptance of a humble lot in life, quite apart from ennui.”

“ Don't believe it. There is no such philosophy. A great part of your happiness here is in the fact that you can afford to live here. Oh, hold up your hands, and be horrified. It is very shocking to have a sister who will say such vulgar things, but I watched you, George, after you paid the bill this morning, and I marked the delighted smile in which you pointed out some effect of light on the 'Sentis,' and I said to myself, 'It is the landlord has touched up the landscape.' ”

“ I declare, Julia, you make me angry. Why will you say such things ? ”

“ Why are we so poor, George ? Tell me that, brother mine. Why are we so poor ? ”

“ There are hundreds as poor ; thousands poorer.”

“ Perhaps they don't care, don't fret about it, don't dwell on all the things they are debarred from, don't want this or that appliance to make life easier. Now look there, what a difference in one's existence to travel that way.”

As she spoke, she pointed to a travelling carriage which swept over the

bridge, with all the speed of four posters, and, with all the clatter of cracking whips and sounding horns, made for the inn of the village.

"How few travel with post now, in these days of railroad," said he, not sorry to turn the conversation into another channel.

"I hope they are going on. I trust they'll not stop here. We have been the great folk of the place up to this, but you'll see how completely the courier or the femme-de-chambre will eclipse us now," said she, rising. "Let us go back, or perhaps they'll give our very rooms away."

"How can you be so silly, Julia?"

"All because we are poor, George. Let me be rich, and you'll be surprised, not only how generous I shall be, but how disposed to think well of every one. Poverty is the very mother of distrust."

"I never heard you rail at our narrow fortune like this before."

"Don't be angry with me, dear George, and I'll make a confession to you. I was not thinking of ourselves, nor of our humble lot all this while; it was a letter I got this morning from Nelly Bramleigh was running in my mind. It has never been out of my thoughts since I received it."

"You never told me of this."

"No. She begged me not to speak of it; and I meant to have obeyed her, but my temper has betrayed me. What Nelly said was, 'Don't tell your brother about these things till he can hear the whole story, which Augustus will write to him as soon as he is able.'"

"What does she allude to?"

"They are ruined—actually ruined."

"The Bramleighs—the rich Bramleighs?"

"Just so. They were worth millions—at least they thought so—a few weeks back, and now they have next to nothing."

"This has come of over-speculation."

"No. Nothing of the kind. It is a claimant to the estate has arisen, an heir whose rights take precedence of their father's; in fact, the grandfather had been privately married early in life, and had a son of whom nothing was heard for years, but who married and left a boy, who, on attaining manhood, preferred his claim to the property. All this mysterious claim was well known to Colonel Bramleigh; indeed, it would appear that for years he was engaged in negotiations with this man's lawyers, sometimes defiantly challenging an appeal to the law, and sometimes entertaining projects of compromise. The correspondence was very lengthy, and, from its nature, must have weighed heavily on the Colonel's mind and spirits, and ended, as Nelly suspects, by breaking up his health.

"It was almost the very first news that met Augustus on his accession to his fortune, and so stunned was he that he wrote to Mr. Sedley to say, —'I have such perfect reliance on both your integrity and ability, that if you assure me this claim is well-founded and this demand a just one, I will not contest it.' He added,—'I am not afraid of poverty, but a public shame and a scandal would be my death.'"

"Just what I should expect from him. What did Sedley say?"

"He didn't say he was exactly a fool, but something very like it ; and he told him, too, that though he might make very light of his own rights, he could not presume to barter away those of others ; and, last of all, he added, what he knew would have its weight with Augustus, that, had his father lived, he meant to have compromised this claim. Not that he regarded it either as well-founded or formidable, but simply as a means of avoiding a very unpleasant publicity. This last intimation had its effect, and Augustus permitted Sedley to treat. Sedley at once addressed himself to Temple—Jack was not to be found—and to Lord Culduff, to learn what share they were disposed to take in such an arrangement. As Augustus offered to bind himself never to marry, and to make a will dividing the estate equally amongst his brothers and sisters, Lord Culduff and Temple quite approved of this determination, but held that they were not called upon to take any portion of the burden of the compromise.

"Augustus would seem to have been so indignant at this conduct, that he wrote to Sedley to put him at once in direct communication with the claimant. Sedley saw by the terms of the letter how much of it was dictated by passion and offended pride, evaded the demand, and pretended that an arrangement was actually pending, and, if uninterfered with, sure to be completed. To this Augustus replied—for Nelly has sent me a copy of his very words—'Be it so. Make such a settlement as you, in your capacity of my lawyer, deem best for my interests. For my own part, I will not live in a house, nor receive the rents of an estate, my rights to which the law may possibly decide against me. Till, then, the matter be determined either way, I and my sister Eleanor, who is like-minded with me in this affair, will go where we can live at least cost, decided, so soon as may be, to have this issue determined, and Castello become the possession of him who rightfully owns it.'

"On the evening of the day he wrote this they left Castello. They only stopped a night in Dublin, and left next morning for the Continent. Nelly's letter is dated from Ostend. She says she does not know where they are going, and is averse to anything like importuning her brother by even a question. She promises to write soon again, however, and tell me all about their plans. They are travelling without a servant, and, so far as she knows, with very little money. Poor Nelly ! she bears up nobly, but the terrible reverse of condition, and the privations she is hourly confronted with, are clearly preying upon her."

"What a change ! Just to think of them a few months back. It was a princely household."

"Just what Nelly says. 'It is complete overthrow ; and if I am not stunned by the reverse, it is because all my sympathies are engaged for poor 'Gusty,' who is doing his best to bear up well. As for myself, I never knew how helpless I was till I tried to pack my trunk. I suppose time will soften down many things that are now somewhat hard to bear ; but for the moment I am impatient and irritable ; and it is only the sight of my dear brother—so calm, so manly, and so dignified in his sorrow—

that obliges me to forget my selfish grief and compose myself as I ought."

As they thus talked, they arrived at the door of the inn, where the landlord met them, with the request that the two gentlemen who had arrived by extra-post, and who could not find horses to proceed on their journey, might be permitted to share the one sitting-room the house contained, and which was at present occupied by the L'Estranges.

"Let us sup in your room, George," whispered Julia, and passed on into the house. L'Estrange gave orders to send the supper to his room, and told the landlord that the salon was at his guests' disposal.

About two hours later, as the curate and his sister sat at the open window, silently enjoying the delicious softness of a starry night, they were startled by the loud talking of persons so near as to seem almost in the room with them.

"English—I'll be sworn they are!" said one. "That instinctive dread of a stranger pertains only to our people. How could it have interfered with their comfort, that we sat and eat our meal in this corner?"

"The landlord says they are young, and the woman pretty. That may explain something. Your countrymen, Philip, are the most jealous race in Europe."

L'Estrange coughed here three or four times, to apprise his neighbours that they were within earshot of others.

"Listen to that cough," cried the first speaker. "That was palpably feigned. It was meant to say, Don't talk so loud."

"I always grow more indiscreet under such provocation," said the other, whose words were slightly tinged with a foreign accent.

A merry laugh burst from Julia at this speech, which the others joined in by very impulse.

"I suspect," said the first speaker, "we might as well have occupied the same room, seeing in what close proximity we stand to each other."

"I think it would be as well to go to your room, Julia," said George, in a low voice. "It is getting late, besides."

"I believe you are right, George. I will say good-night."

The last words appeared to have caught the ears of the strangers, who exclaimed together, "Good-night, good-night;" and he with the foreign accent began to hum, in a very sweet tenor voice, "Buona sera, buona notte, buona sera;" which Julia would fain have listened to, but George hurried her away, and closed the door.

"There is the end of that episode," said the foreign voice. "Le Mari Jaloux has had enough of us. Your women in England are taught never to play with fire."

"I might reply that yours are all pyrotechnists," said the other, with a laugh.

The clatter of plates and the jingle of glasses, as the waiter laid the table for supper, drowned their voices, and L'Estrange dropped off asleep soon after. A hearty burst of laughter at last aroused him. It came

from the adjoining room, where the strangers were still at table, though it was now nigh daybreak.

"Yes," said he of the foreign accent, "I must confess it. I never made a lucky hit in my life without the ungrateful thought of how much luckier it might have been."

"It is your Italian blood has given you that temperament."

"I knew you'd say so, Philip; before my speech was well out, I felt the reply you'd make me. But let me tell you that you English are not a whit more thankful to fortune than we are; but in your matter-of-fact way you accept a benefit as your just due, while we, more conscious of our deservings, always feel that no recompence fully equalled what we merited. And so is it that ever since that morning at Furnival's Inn, I keep on asking myself, Why twenty thousand? Why not forty—why not twice forty?"

"I was quite prepared for all this. I think I saw the reaction beginning as you signed the paper."

"No, there you wrong me, Philip. I wrote boldly, like a man who felt that he was making a great resolve, and could stand by it. You'd never guess whom what you have called 'the reaction' set in."

"I am curious to know when that was."

"I'll tell you. You remember our visit to Castello. You thought it a strange caprice of mine to ask the lawyer whether, now that all was finally settled between us, I might be permitted to see the house—which, as the family had left, could be done without any unpleasantness. I believe my request amused *him* as much as it did *you*; he thought it a strange caprice, but he saw no reason to refuse it, and I saw smiled as he sat down to write the note to the housekeeper. I have no doubt that he thought, 'It is a gambler's whim; he wants to see the stake he played for, and what he might perhaps have won had he had courage to play o'er the game.' You certainly took that view of it."

The other muttered something like a half assent, and the former speaker continued: "And you were both of you wrong. I wanted to see the finished picture of which I possessed the sketch—the beautiful Flora—whose original was my grandmother. I cannot tell you the intense longing I had to see the features that pertained to one who belonged to me; a man must be as utterly desolate as I am, to comprehend the craving I felt to have something—anything that might stand to me in place of family. It was this led me to Castello, and it was this that made me, when I crossed the threshold, indifferent to all the splendours of the place, and only occupied with one thought, one wish—to see the frescos in the Octagon Tower,—poor old Giacomo's great work,—the picture of his beautiful daughter. And was she not beautiful? I ask you, Philip, had Raphael himself ever such a model for sweetness of expression? Come, come. You were just as wild as myself in your enthusiasm as you stood before her; and it was only by a silly jest that you could repress the agitation you were so ashamed of."

"I remember I told you that the family had terribly degenerated since her day."

"And yet you tried to trace a likeness between us."

"You won't say that I succeeded," said he, with a laugh.

"It was then as I stood there gazing on her, thinking of her sad story, that I bethought me what an ignoble part it was I played to compromise the rights that she had won, and how unworthy I was to be the descendant of the beautiful Enrichetta."

"You are about the only man I ever met who was in love with his grandmother."

"Call it how you like, her lovely face has never left me since I saw it there."

"And yet your regret implies that you are only sorry not to have made a better bargain."

"No, Philip: my regret is not to have stood out for terms that must have been refused me; I wish I had asked for the 'impossible.' I tried to make a laughing matter of it when I began, but I cannot—I cannot. I have got the feeling that I have been selling my birthright."

"And you regret that the mess of pottage has not been bigger."

"There's the impossibility in making a friend of an Englishman! It is the sordid side of everything he will insist on turning uppermost. Had I told a Frenchman what I have told you, he would have lent me his whole heart in sympathy."

"To be sure he would. He would have accepted all that stupid sentimentality about your grandmother as refined feeling, and you'd have been blubbering over each other this half hour."

"If you only knew the sublime project I had. I dare not tell you of it in your miserable spirit of depreciating all that is high in feeling and noble in aspiration. You would ridicule it. Yes, mon cher, you would have seen nothing in my plan, save what you could turn into absurdity."

"Let me hear it. I promise you to receive the information with the most distinguished consideration."

"You could not. You could not elevate your mind even to comprehend my motives. What would you have said, if I had gone to this Mr. Bramleigh, and said, Cousin——"

"He is not your cousin, to begin with."

"No matter; one calls every undefined relation cousin. Cousin, I would have said, this house that you live in, these horses that you drive, this plate that you dine off, these spreading lawns and shady woods that lie around, are mine; I am their lawful owner; I am the true heir to them; and you are nothing—nobody—the son of an illegitimate——"

"I'd say he'd have pitched you out of the window."

"Wait a while; not so fast. Nevertheless, I would have said, Yours is the prescription and the habit. These things have pertained to you since your birth; they are part of you, and you of them. You cannot live without them, because you know no other life than where they enter

and mingle ; while I, poor and an adventurer, have never tasted luxury, nor had any experiences but of trouble and difficulty. Let us each keep the station to which habit and time have accustomed him. Do you live, as you have ever lived, grand seigneur as you are—rich, honoured, and regarded. I will never dispute your possession nor assail your right. I only ask that you accept me as your relation,—a cousin, who has been long absent in remote lands ; a traveller, an ‘eccentric,’ who likes a life of savagery and adventure, and who has come back, after years of exile, to see his family and be with his own. Imagine yourself for an instant to be Bramleigh, and what would you have said to this ? Had I simply asked to be one of them, to call them by their Christian names, to be presented to their friends as Cousin Anatole—I ask you now—seriously, what you would have replied to such a noble appeal ? ”

“ I don’t know exactly what I should have said, but I think I can tell you what I would have done.”

“ Well, out with it.”

“ I’d have sent for the police, and handed you over to the authorities for either a rogue or a madman.”

“ Bon soir. I wish you a good-night—pleasant dreams, too, if that be possible.”

“ Don’t go. Sit down. The dawn is just breaking, and you know I ordered the horses for the first light.”

“ I must go into the air then. I must go where I can breathe.”

“ Take a cigar, and let us talk of something else.”

“ That is easy enough for you ; you who treat everything as a mere passing incident, and would make life a series of unconnected episodes. You turn from this to that, just as you taste of this dish and that at dinner ; but I who want to live a life—*entendu* ?—to live a life : to be to-morrow the successor of myself to-day, to carry with me an identity—how am I to practise your philosophy ? ”

“ Here come the horses ; and I must say, I am for once grateful to their jingling bells, helping as they do to drown more nonsense than even you usually give way to.”

“ How did we ever become friends ? Can you explain that to me ? ”

“ I suppose it must have been in one of your lucid moments, Anatole—for you have them at times.”

“ Ah, I have ! But if you’re getting complimentary, I’d better be off. Will you look to the bill ? and I’ll take charge of the baggage.”



Some Chapters on Talk.

VI.—OF TIMES FOR TALKING.

IT is an unquestionable fact that one of the most desirable things to be borne in mind by all persons who hope to attain to any degree of proficiency in the art of talking, is the necessity of timing their observations—be they of whatever kind they may—in a careful and judicious fashion. It is impossible to overrate the importance of this consideration. The success of a remark, of an anecdote, of a piece of description, depends more upon its being well-timed than upon any one other single element. There is surely no one who has considered this subject of ours at all attentively who has not, at some time or other, been struck by the truth of this statement. Have we not all observed over and over again how often a very poor remark indeed, made at the right moment, will be received with applause, while a really good thing, if it happens to be said *apropos de rien*, will for that very reason of its not having been properly led up to, fall dismally flat, and be altogether a failure. We have most of us, at some time or other, taken note of such failures, even if we have not known enough of the art of talking to attribute them to their right cause.

This timing of what we have to say being then a thing of such moment, it is only natural that we—being engaged in such an investigation as this with which we are now busy—should inquire earnestly whether there are any rules for the guidance of the talk-student who desires to excel in this particular branch of art; whether, in short, there are in existence any rules by which he may learn—when he has got anything to say—at what time he ought, and at what time he ought not, to say it. As far as the writer of these chapters knows, there are no such laws in existence. The arcana of talk have been but little examined into. Conversation, as an art, has been less made the subject of study than might—considering its importance—have been expected, and professors of that art have, as one cannot but think, shown some degree of selfishness in keeping their discoveries in connection with it to themselves. We are thrown then upon our own resources by their reticence, and compelled to pursue the knowledge which we desire to attain under very great difficulties. We must, however, by no means despair.

The particular branch of such knowledge which we are now engaged in studying—the timing, namely, of our talk in a discreet and skilful manner—is one, as has been said, of very considerable interest. Let us see if we cannot grope our way to some few truths concerning it. Among these one of the first which, after due amount of reflection, asserts itself strongly, is the conviction that we must avoid, by all means and at any

expense, the practice of dragging in the topic on which we wish to talk, by main force. If our talk is to prosper, the subject of it must be led up to gradually. It must be led up to gradually, and what is more, naturally; the conversation reaching it by easy stages, and, as one may say, in the course of nature. And this leading up must, you are entreated to remember, be the work of destiny, and by no means brought about by you who desire to profit by it. Next in magnitudo to the fault of dragging in your subject neck and heels, is the error of loading up to it yourself in a forced and unnatural manner. You must wait for your opportunity. Self-control and patience are as necessary to the attainment of conversational, as of any other distinction. You must be patient then, but you must also be vigilant; a combination of qualities rare but indispensable to those who would be great in anything. You must be ready when that opportunity which has been spoken of does come, to seize it and hold it fast. You must hold your remark, your description, your story, or whatever it is, in check, as a skilful gillie does a deer-hound, but you must be ready to let it slip when the right moment comes. If that moment is missed, your chance is gone. Not the proverbial mutton, not Queen Anne herself, are more utterly dead than is a subject which has once been disposed of and dropped. You cannot revive it; to assert that such resuscitation is possible, would be to mislead many unoffending and perhaps deserving persons. We have all of us seen such resuscitation attempted: "You were talking just now of dromedaries, it reminds me of a clever thing said by Professor Humps." We have all heard something of this sort in our time, but have we ever known the anecdote thus introduced to succeed? The fact is that there are some people the peculiar nature of whose genius it is to suggest to them the most brilliant retorts and the most apposite remarks, some considerable time after the occasion when they would have been useful and appropriate has passed away. I should be sorry to disparage the intellectual gifts of such persons, but I am compelled to say that I can give them no comfort. Above all, I cannot encourage any attempt to make use of these same laggard ideas. If a good thing comes into your head after the opportunity for letting it loose upon society has gone by, the best thing you can do is to gulp it down altogether, or keep it by you, in case a use for it should come in the course of time.

In addition to this readiness, the importance of which has been so strongly insisted on, it is necessary that any individual who hopes to get on as a talker should be, to some extent, morally thick-skinned and tough, as he will have, in the pursuit of the object which he has set before him, to encounter many things which, to persons of a sensitive nature, are extremely distressing. It is, for instance—and still keeping to the question of fortunate and unfortunate times for starting a subject—by no means an uncommon thing with an habitual talker to make a false start, and to find himself balked just at the moment when he is beginning to hold forth. The best talkers are liable to be thus interrupted. Therefore if, when you begin "I was travelling last summer in the Pyrenees," you should happen

to find that somebody else, with greater power of voice, or better social standing, or both, has just started something else, or that some other tiresome person whose conversational innings you thought was over, is still, metaphorically, upon his legs, you must not mind, but must try again at the next opportunity, or at the next after that ; for Destiny, whom she has once begun to baulk a man, has a way of going on doing so. One thing you must not do : you must not let the matter drop. You must travel over those Pyrenees even if you are hindered in starting on the journey, as will occasionally happen, half-a-dozen times. You will get to have a very cordial detestation of the opening words of your own story at about the third repetition of them, and you will moreover find that any old established talkers who may be present will wear a surprised look as you go on ; but you must bear these things as well as you can. There are difficulties connected with the pursuit of all the arts, and the art of talking is no exception to the rest. The fact is that interruptions occur continually, not only at the beginning but throughout the whole course of even the best-timed speech, and how to persevere through them is one of the lessons which the talk-student is obliged to learn early in his career. Long statements, whether of the narrative or of some other kind, are most commonly made at a dinner-table—indeed in all these chapters on Talk, it is mainly dinner-table conversation with which we find ourselves to be occupied—and the interruptions to conversation necessarily connected with the meal itself are always sufficiently numerous. The continuity of what you have to say is broken from time to time by the arrival at your elbow of dishes which, whether you accept or reject them, are equally impertinent to your narrative, and by proffers of wine, of which the same thing may be said. It may even happen that the very dinner of which you are partaking has been got up for the express purpose of introducing some special dish, or some remarkable delicacy—a piece of beef which has come from the Brazils in paraffine, or a canvas-back duck which has travelled from the United States in ice—and that your story has the ill-luck to be in progress at the moment when the dish of the day is produced. Or even if the dinner has not been got up with a distinct object of this kind, it is still quite possible that when you are in full swing, and even perhaps nearing your crisis, some *entrée* of a novel description may make its *début*, and your host, who really cannot be expected to sacrifice his effect for the sake of yours, will arrest your progress with,—“One moment, Jones, I must just call our friend the alderman’s attention to the merits of this prawn curry.”

The aspiring conversationalist must be prepared for plenty of other interruptions to his talk, besides those to which he is liable when sitting at a feast. At times when less ceremony is observed—at afternoon parties and during morning calls—the probabilities are perhaps even more in favour of his being interrupted while holding forth, than on the occasion of a set dinner-party. Afternoon gatherings are generally informal, and people arrive and depart at all hours. Now abrupt arrivals and departures are ruinous to the effectiveness of continuous statement. When your

favourite listener jumps up to welcome her dearest Susan, and then proceeds to inquire after hosts of relations and friends of the newly-arrived one, what becomes of your story ? The thread of your narrative is abruptly snapped. New arrivals, then, are fatal to your eloquence ; so is the presence of a lively and intelligent dog which barks when anybody moves ; and so, above all things, are children. In those modern days the conversation of these young people is largely appreciated, and it must be a very important personage indeed who can make sure of his audience when he has a child of four years old for a competitor.

A great deal has been said in this chapter concerning the times and seasons when it is not good to enter upon a narrative or to start a subject. It may perhaps be expected now that something shall be said upon the more positive side of this question, and some hint given as to when it is good to let off the remark or the anecdote with which you hope to make some sort of effect. It is very difficult to lay down any fixed principle in a case where so much must necessarily depend upon circumstance. The talker must indeed, to a great extent, be guided by his own discretion. He will have to learn by experience, more or less bitter. He will make mistakes, but will, if there is anything of aptness in him, profit by them. Nevertheless, difficult as it is to speak with anything like precision on this point, a little may be said as to favourable opportunities of making a conversational beginning, which may be useful. There are undoubtedly particular moments for making such starts, which can to some extent be calculated on. We will give a specimen or two of such before concluding this chapter. Keeping, then, to dinner-time—that period of which we have already had so much to say in these chapters—it will have been observed by most persons who are in the habit of dining gregariously, that there is always a certain dish handed round of which no one can be induced to partake. It is ordinarily the third *entrée*, and very often consists of stewed pigeons. Whatever it consists of, however, its fate is always the same. It is refused by the honourable lady on the right of the host, and then everybody says “ No, thank you ; ” or shakes his head as the unappreciated dainty is offered to each. It is a very curious phenomenon in connection with dinner-parties this rejection, by common consent on the part of the guests, of some one particular dish—curious in many ways, and in none more than in its being always done in the midst of a profound silence. The circulation of the stewed pigeons, or whatever else it may be, is invariably the signal for a pause ; and it is of that pause that the discreet talker will take advantage, as giving him a fine opportunity for the launching of his conversational bark. There is no time like it. There is another very fair season—when the sweets begin to languish, and the cheese is only dawning. A favourable moment this, sometimes a very favourable moment, but not to be compared to the first.

And besides the opportunities which arise at dinner-time, there are others which may just be hinted at with advantage. In country-house life there occur from time to time occasions when it is good to have a

subject ready, and to let it slip. In the winter season, to take an instance, there is generally a long interval between the time when the different guests come in from hunting, shooting, or whatever other out-door occupation they may have been engaged in, and the moment when they retire to their rooms to dress for dinner. Gathered round the big fire, in the hall or library, enjoying the half light before the candles come, physically tired for the most part, and with nothing to do, the temporary inhabitants of a country-house are at such a time very ready to be amused with anything, and may be converted, by any tolerably able talker, into an excellent and appreciative audience. After church and before luncheon on Sunday, when humanity is given to walking up and down on lawns or to lounging in picture-rooms, there is another period of time when the talker may do a good stroke of business, if he finds himself ready for action. But we must not multiply these examples. It would be simply impossible to note down all the opportunities of this sort which occur in town and country ; and these few are given only as specimens which the student will perhaps find of use in helping him to judge for himself which are, and which are not, the most favourable occasions for the display of his eloquence.

VII.—OF THE RECIPIENTS OF TALK.

THERE can be no doubt that, for the fit and perfect development of any kind of talk, passive, as well as active, agents are needed ; and that the writer of these chapters would be performing his part in a very incomplete manner, if he did not say something about that very necessary and deserving class of persons who receive and digest the conversation of their more garrulous brethren, and who may be called the recipients of talk. Necessary as an audience to the actor, or a congregation to the preacher, is a listener to the habitual talker ; and it may serve as some sort of consolation to those tongue-tied individuals who have discovered that they are finally and incurably taciturn, to feel that, at any rate, this line in social life is open to them ; and that, as good listeners—for there must be some to hear as well as some to talk—they may make up a little for their conversational deficiencies : and even, if they cannot talk themselves, may promote talk in others.

The listeners with whom the habitual talker finds himself brought into contact are of various kinds, and perform that passive part of theirs with various degrees of success. There are some who listen from indolent motives and because listening is not so much trouble as talking ; some who pretend to listen and don't ; some who try to listen and can't ; some who understand you too soon, and before the words are out of your mouth ; some who are tardy in seizing your meaning, only arriving at it long after you (the talker) have got away to something else ; and some who receive what you have to say just as you deliver it, neither hurrying on in front of you nor lagging behind. It is a curious coincidence, but

there seems to be a certain amount of resemblance between these different sorts of audiences and the different kinds of partners with whom dancing-men tell us that they meet from time to time. These nimble youths inform us that they find a very great difference between one and another of the young women with whom they engage in those rapid whirling movements, which some of us, who are wheezy and inactive, stand by and watch with so much envy and admiration. They tell us that there are some partners who will, so to speak, meet them half-way, doing their part in the valse with care and energy ; others who go beyond this point, almost breaking away from their partners in their excessive desire to be doing ; and yet others, who leave all the labour to the cavalier—as he is called in the language of the schools—hanging on to him, as it were, like a dead weight, and requiring to be dragged round by main force.

Now, these various kinds of partners have certainly their prototypes among the listeners to conversation, as every experienced talker will admit. Such a one will, for instance, recognize immediately that particular kind of listener whom the talker has to drag along by main force. A torpid soul this, who gets left behind, who is always occupied with some clause in your narrative which you have done with long ago ; and who takes pains to let you know that this is the case, by interrupting you when you are getting near the crisis of your tale with questions relating to its introductory portion. A provoking person this, it must be admitted ; but not so provoking as that other listener who errs on the side of excessive sharpness. The first of these varieties fails occasionally, it is true, to laugh when your crisis comes ; but even that is better than laughing before it has arrived at some anticipated *dénouement*, which probably is not the real one. This is a very defective kind of listener, and is unfortunately largely represented among the ladies of creation. They are so anxious to prove their quickness of perception, that they assume to know what you are going to say before you have completed your colloquial arrangements in your own mind ; and will put an interpretation upon a sentence which you have only just begun, or furnish a crisis to a story when it is still in an early stage, in a manner which is the more inconvenient because it commonly happens that, in both cases, the termination thus gratuitously supplied is a wrong one. It may generally be observed, by the way, that when a lady has finished a story for you in this fashion, she never seems to appreciate the real authentic conclusion of the anecdote when at last you do succeed in publishing it. These listeners, who anticipate and get ahead of the person to whose talk they are listening, are both troublesome and disconcerting. The talker who has not had much experience will easily be taken in by one of these, and will at first, very likely, congratulate himself on being associated with a companion distinguished by so much intelligence and quickness of perception. It is not till he has been in practice for some considerable time that he gets to perceive that this particular variety of the class whose characteristics we are considering must be, like so many others, set down among the bad listeners.

These bad listeners are a very numerous race, and their badness is attributable to a great variety of causes. With some, it is a natural infirmity. With others it is a fault, arising from indolence—from a bad habit of not attending. A great many bad listeners have wandering and discursive minds—minds of a parenthetical description, which go off on wool-gathering excursions, without leave or license. When persons whose mental faculties are in this disastrous and undisciplined condition try to listen, it continually happens that some chance word or expression which you—the talker—let drop, sets them off in this way. They are reminded of something by what you have said, and that “something” takes such entire possession of their every faculty that they have really nothing left in the way of attention at their disposal. A man, again, who is full of something which he wants to say, must always be a bad listener, and this is one reason why a good talker is so seldom able to listen well; when he ought to be attending to what is being said by some one else, he is all the time busy with what he intends to let off himself, as soon as he can get the chance. A bad listener the man who is thus primed and ready to go off. It is hardly his fault that he does not attend. He cannot if he would.

But besides these instances of defective listening on the part of individuals whose offences are to some extent involuntary, there are others which might be quoted of persons who offend wilfully in this way: open offenders who do not even try to listen, who fail to assume a virtue when they have it not; who break in upon the talker's utterances with undisguised interruption, or shamelessly abandon him in the midst of his eloquence, and bestow their attention on somebody else who is not addressing them, but in whose talk they choose to take or to affect an interest. With this particular kind of deliberate and intentional bad listening, it is hardly necessary that we should trouble ourselves. The very essence of such misdemeanour is that it is committed wilfully, and for wilful offenders against the laws which regulate our social life these modest chapters are not written. There are, however, besides these truculent persons who sin of malice preposse, in the manner indicated above, some who fall into the same error inadvertently, and because of the weakness of their natures; and these, at any rate, deserve a word of counsel and warning. It is owing to some curious idiosyncracy powerfully developed in our natures that we all manifest an extraordinary readiness to be absorbed in anything which is not intended to occupy us, to the utter exclusion of all interest in whatever is expressly designed to lay hold of our attention. Many an instance might be given of this peculiarity of our imperfect nature. When you provide a company of children with the means of engaging in some game suited to their years, be it nine-pins, trap and ball, or what not, is it not curious to observe how promptly they will abandon the sport in question, in order to harass a couple of grave adults, who are at billiards? the perverse young creatures abandoning their own playthings and desiring only to get possession of the machinery of the billiard-table—those cues and balls of which they do not even know the use. When an

artist, again, invites a party of amateurs to inspect his great picture before it goes to the Exhibition, it commonly happens that these discerning persons will turn their backs upon the *magnum opus*, which they are there to see, and will go after some little sketch of a kitchen interior, or the like, which the artist has hidden away in a corner, and will fall into raptures over it. It is the same perversity of our nature which is exhibited in both these cases which renders that conversation, which is going on at the other end of the table, so interesting to us. It is not intended that we should take part in it, and consequently we yearn after it. While dealing with this particular difficulty connected with the practice of listening, it should be added that there are cases in which this tendency to listen to a conversation in which we are not engaged is attributable to other causes besides the mere perversity of our natures. It does sometimes happen that at the very moment when a neighbour is boring us with entirely vapid and uninteresting talk, some subject in which we have a special interest is being discussed within our hearing. When this is the case the situation, it must be admitted, is a painful one ; and to be guilty of some slight degree of inattention to a neighbour's prattle, under such circumstances, would only be to err by what the theologians call a "pardonable human weakness."

I have not said much all this time about good listeners. They are scarce, almost as scarce as good talkers. A good listener is no egotist, has but a moderate opinion of himself, is possessed of a great desire for information on all kinds of subjects, and of a hundred other fine qualities. It is too much the general impression that listening is merely a negative proceeding, but such is very far from being really the case. A perfectly inert person is not a good listener, any more than a bolster is. You require the recipient of your talk to manifest intelligence, to show interest, and what is more, to feel it. The fact is, that to listen well—as to do anything else well—is not easy. It is not easy even to seem to listen well, as we observe notably in the conduct of bad actors, and stage-amateurs, who break down in this particular perhaps more often and more completely than in any other ; you will see one of them listening—or rather *not* listening—to the most thrilling statements without being in the slightest degree affected by what he hears ; thinking all the time of his own speech which is coming presently, or perhaps of his silk stockings and trunk-hose, but not of the murder of his wife and family of children, which is just being announced to him by a fortunate survivor among the last. It is difficult, then, even to appear to listen, whether on the stage or off it ; and an experienced talker will almost always know whether the person whom he is addressing is attending or not by the expression of his countenance. When a man stares wildly at you while you talk, you may generally have your doubts whether he really understands what you are saying to him ; and when he repeats the last words of your sentences after you, in a soft tone of voice, you may be quite sure that he does not.

VIII.—ON SILENCE.

THE author of the celebrated saying that "Silence is golden," must surely have been little addicted to mingling with his fellows on occasions of a festive sort; and, above all things, can never have been in the habit of himself playing the part of host. The position of the giver of a feast, when the entertainment is presided over by this same "golden" spirit of silence, is a sufficiently distressing one. What pains will not he or she take to exorcise the evil genius, trying to lure the different guests on to speak of what they understand—the banker to discuss finance, the painter to hold forth on art, the Eastern traveller to treat of turbans and dromedaries? There are seasons, however, when all such efforts are entirely fruitless, and when the silent influence seems to assert itself on the company with an irresistible power which nothing can dispel. Most of us have in our time assisted at more than one social celebration which has been distinguished by a complete dearth of talk. We, most of us, know what pauses are, at a dinner-table; the silent influence indeed seems, sometimes, to act almost like a spell. Everybody wants to break it, but nobody can succeed in doing so; or if they do, it is only for a very short time, and there is almost immediate relapse. When some one, gifted with extraordinary nerve, dares to make a remark in the midst of one of these awful pauses, what a sensation there is! All the members of that afflicted company look up eagerly; they rush at the new subject, as the ducks do at a morsel of roll when it is thrown into their pond. They pounce upon it, tear it into little bits, which each carries off with him and makes the most of in his own corner. And then, to continue our simile, just as it sometimes happens that the object cast into the duck-pond is not a piece of bread, but a scraw of paper, or a cork, or some other worthless object thrown in by a bystander out of mere idleness, and from which the ducks turn away in disgust, so is it very often with the subject so greedily pounced upon by these famished guests. It turns out not to be a subject really, to be a mere nothing when inspected closely, and is presently thrown aside as unavailable. It has been well observed that "nothing succeeds like success," and, something in the same way, it may be said that nothing makes people so silent as silence. When once that terrible influence has become established, its victims struggle against it in vain. In vain does Amphitryon, from the bottom of his table, solicit the opinion of his artist guest on the merits of the Exhibition in Trafalgar Square. He makes some guarded reply, to the effect that it is a fair average show; and when pressed hard to say whether there is not some special work of more than ordinary merit on the Academy walls, he only answers in the negative, and in such a dry and forbidding tone as precludes further questioning. Equally vain is the attempt to draw the traveller out. He is generally ready enough to hold forth, but on this particular occasion he too is under the fatal influence; and when called upon to state in what particular respect a sunset in Syria differs from a sunset in England, replies

laconically, "More clouds in England;" and straightway lapses back into silence. A conversational catastrophe such as this is so distressing a thing, and is so entirely fatal to the success of any social celebration of what kind soever, that it really does seem worth while to devote one or two of these chapters to some sort of attempt to find out what are the causes which operate most powerfully in bringing about such a state of things as has just been described. And this inquiry will be twofold, involving an examination, first, into the reasons of the collective silence of mixed assemblies; and secondly, into those which affect the private individuals of whom such assemblies are made up, rendering them for the time being speechless members of society. If we can but find out what it is that makes people silent, we shall have advanced more than half-way towards the attainment of our great object—the discovery, namely, of the best method of getting them to talk.

And now as to the collective silence of persons assembled together for a festive purpose. This distressing phenomenon may be attributable to a variety of causes. To begin with, the giver of the feast may be in fault. He may be young and inexperienced. He may be mistrustful of his cook, and, sitting speechless at the foot of his table, may exchange timid glances with his consort—glances which speak as plainly as words—expressing very eloquently his fear that "the whole thing is going badly." A host afflicted with misgivings of this sort will act as a wet blanket upon the company over which he presides, and will be not only silent himself but the cause of silence in others. A man should examine himself before he undertakes that arduous part of host, as to whether he is capable of filling it properly. Can he maintain a calm exterior, he should ask himself, if the soup should turn out to be burnt, or retain his presence of mind when the turbot comes to table insufficiently boiled? It is not easy to do so. Unless a man has a very considerable amount of moral strength he will break down utterly under the pressure of a misfortune of this sort, and will become incapable not only of talking but of listening also; staring vacantly into the face of any one who addresses him, but in reality seeing nothing except a vision of underdone fish, red, and clinging to the bones. The example of the master of the feast, when it happens that, owing to the causes given above, or any other, he is rendered temporarily speechless, will most surely affect his company. The individuals of whom that company is composed will insensibly take their tone from their president, and the mere look of him, under such circumstances, will be enough to quench their conversational ardour.

But there are other influences besides those which are attributable to the deficiencies of an incapable host, which have the effect of promoting silence among persons sitting at a feast. The meal itself, and its accessories, may be in fault. There may not be enough, or—which is just as bad—the impression may be conveyed that there is not enough to eat. There may be hitches and failures in the working of the dinner machinery. These things will produce pauses in the best regulated companies. Insuffi-

cient light, again, is another cause of silence. Perhaps it acts upon the guests in the same way that the insufficient dinner does, and conveys an idea of dearth. Anything which does this, anything which suggests poverty, or gives an impression that the feast-giver cannot afford to do as he is doing, is entirely fatal to everything in the shape of talk. The fact is, that all sorts of small influences will operate to make people silent. They will often decline to talk if the table round which they are assembled is too full, and an elbow conflict is kept up during the entire progress of the meal ; while, on the other hand, if their chairs are set too far apart, and they have to address each other across a sort of bridgeless chasm, they are still less likely to be conversationally disposed. All these, which some ignorant people would call *small* things, ought to be dwelt upon seriously by the giver of an entertainment. And there is another subject on which it behoves him to bestow a prodigious amount of attention and study—the choice of his guests. An ill-assorted company, or a company in itself well-assorted, but the members of which are respectively misplaced, are never to be depended upon to talk. If you ask people who are mutually unacquainted to sit together for two or three hours without stirring, you can never feel any sense of security that they will engage in conversation. It is hardly to be expected, indeed, that they should do so. Again, if your guests do happen to know each other, but are yet misplaced at table—persons who have no tastes in common, or, which is worse, no subjects in common, thrust together cheek by jowl—what have you to hope for ? It is better to arrange all these matters beforehand, and not to leave anything, if you can help it, to chance. Chance will infallibly play you a trick. Chance will give your Low Church lady who frequents Exeter Hall, and is addicted to the distributing of tracts, to be the companion of that young friend of yours who is such a distinguished member of the amateur dramatic corps, and whose talk is of Lord Dundreary, or Box and Cox. Chance will place your learned professor, whose brain is entirely occupied with theories concerning the integral calculus, or the Greek particle, next to the fashionable lady who likes to discourse of operas and balls, and the *Court Circular*. What sort of conversational results can you expect from such combinations as these ?

And there is another danger to be carefully guarded against by all persons who may have at any time to choose the company of which some social gathering is to be composed. This is, the danger of including among them a specimen of the wet-blanket tribe. It is in the power of one individual of this species to spoil the fun of as many as half-a-dozen of comfortably-disposed guests ; for it is in small assemblies that his power is so terribly felt. When he makes one of a large party it does not matter so much, as he can then only exercise his clammy influence over one or two sufferers in his immediate vicinity ; but in a small gathering, the presence of such a one is positively fatal. It is curious to observe, on such occasions, how gradually but surely he affects the spirits of those with whom he is brought in contact. He is always tacitly at variance

with the rest of the company. *Si omnes, ego non*, seems to be his motto. If they laugh, he is as grave as an undertaker. If they are interested, he is bored. He will not talk, neither will he listen ; or if he does, it is with many unmistakeable indications of apathy and disbelief—a quality, this last, which he seems, indeed, to take every opportunity of making manifest. He sneers when other people talk, and if he does open his mouth at all it is generally to contradict. A terrible personage this, who would be sufficiently formidable even if he came single-handed into the social field ; but he seldom does so, being generally accompanied by a wife, who takes her tone from her husband (being much afraid of him), and so manages to diffuse, as it were, the moisture which comes from the original blanket, and assists materially in damping the spirits of the assembled company. No doubt there *are* occasions when the inviting of a wet-blanket to partake of your hospitality is a thing of necessity. He is a relative, or he is a person with whom you have business relations of profitable character to yourself. For these or other reasons, into which it is not necessary to enter, you are obliged to ask him. Do so then, since you must ; but fail not, when you invite him to sit at your board, to take certain precautions, by the adoption of which you may materially diminish his power of doing mischief. First of all, you must remember that it should always be to a large party that he is bidden, and not to a small one ; and, secondly, when you *have* bidden him to your large party, and have got him on your hands, you must exercise all the discretion of which you are possessed in assigning to him the place which he is to occupy at table. Bear in mind always, that his grim personal appearance—whether he is lean and acid-looking, or large and leaden, does not matter—must always take a high place among his many qualifications for damping the spirits of his fellows. Remember this, and beware of assigning him a central position, or of placing him at either extremity of your table, where his disconcerting countenance will catch the attention of a large proportion of your guests every time that they look up from their plates. The best way to neutralise him is to place him near to a corner, and to give him for neighbours, on one side an exceedingly conventional, and if possible a rather stupid lady, on whom a talker would be thrown away ; and on the other, that inestimable person (to dinner-givers), the man who makes a noise. By acting thus, you may really, in a great degree, counteract the influence of your wet-blanket and diminish his infective power. The stupid lady will drink in the moisture and absorb it like a sponge, and it will glance off the noisy man without having any more effect upon him than rain upon a bronze figure.

There are a great many other causes which are productive of collective silence, besides those which we have already dealt with—atmospheric influences, the approach of rain, a thunder-storm brewing in the air, exhaustion on the part of the guests, from having been kept too long without their dinners—these and many more will act upon a mixed company as agents of taciturnity. But all these are of entirely minor importance, compared

with that which we have already spoken of in an early part of this chapter—any want, namely, of tact and discretion on the part of the person who plays the host. If he is silent and pre-occupied, if he has some anxiety pressing upon him, if his chief lion has sent a put-off at the last moment, if he has just heard a piece of bad news, or if some passage-of-arms between him and the lady who shares his joys and divides his troubles has just preceded the arrival of his company—if any troubles of the above description are pressing upon him, and he has not sufficient control over himself to shake such influences off; or again, if he fails to attend to the conversational wants of his guests—things are likely to go very ill with him. These conversational wants of the persons whom he is entertaining he should look after as much as their more material needs. He must be diligent, and on the alert, in attending to them. He must never even for a moment sink into a condition of inactivity, or give way to despondency; and if at last, and in spite of all his efforts, his friends are still obstinately and inveterately taciturn, he *must go on ignoring this fact*, and must beware of making any allusion, even of the most playful kind, to the silence which has become established. If he should say sportively but plaintively, “We seem to be rather a silent party,” or, “Won’t anybody make a remark?” he is lost. For when once an observation of this sort has been issued upon society, and has been followed by an hysterical laugh upon the part of the assembled company, it will invariably be observed that a silence, of a more leaden character than that which had preceded these facetious allusions, will inevitably set in.

IX.—OF SILENCE.

I HAVE reached now the second part of my inquiry into the reasons which operate to hinder people from talking; and having bestowed some amount of study on the collective silence of assembled companies, I come next to a consideration of the silence of individuals, and the causes to which it is attributable. These are, after all, not so numerous as at first sight one would expect them to be. Treating this subject of taciturnity as Burton does his of Melancholy, one might attribute the phenomenon under our consideration to some four principal causes. Pride, a cause, one might say; indolence a cause; pusillanimity a cause; dulness a cause. Indeed the silence of most taciturn people will be found to be assignable to one or other of these influences.

It may seem at first sight to be a paradoxical proceeding to assert that the first of these “causes”—pride—is a hindrance to talkativeness on the part of him who is habitually under its influence. Pride—some will say—would lead to display and boasting, and the natural development of these is through the agency of talk. This is, however, but a superficial view of the question. If a man talks much, he *must* of necessity occasionally degenerate into twaddle; and must also, sometimes, run the

risk of making mis-statements and blunders, and he leaves himself open in consequence to criticism, and is liable to be corrected and set right by others. These are risks which the proud man will not run. He is, above all things in this world, afraid of making a fool of himself, and of appearing to disadvantage before his fellows. That bugbear is for ever before him. To have the accuracy of his statement questioned, or even the statement itself disproved, would be simply intolerable to him, and so he refuses to hazard what a man less sensitive to correction would put forward without hesitation, lest he should expose himself to the humiliation—as he considers it—of being put right by some better-informed bystander. This is one of the modes in which pride will operate to prevent a man from talking—one among many. Sometimes it will take the more specious form of fastidiousness, and of that self-criticism to which proud men are so much given. In this case he is silent, because the only things which he can think of to say do not appear to him to be worth saying. As the possible subjects on which he might speak, if he only chose, pass in review before him, he rejects them scornfully, one after another, as commonplace and unoriginal. A goodly array of these possible topics, on which he might discourse to the neighbour who is placed beside him, present themselves to him as he sits at table. Some illustrious personage, an Eastern potentate, or an Italian liberator, has just been visiting our shores, and all the world has been running after this new lion : "Shall I talk to this young woman about the Sultan or Garibaldi ?" says our proud friend to himself ; and then he determines that he will not. All the rest are talking about the popular subject. It is not good enough for him ! Again, a new opera has just come out or a new play : an ordinary mortal would look upon either one or the other of these entertainments as a topic available for conversational purposes, if only by way of making a beginning. "Common—the invariable subject," says the proud man to himself. "What is it to me whether this young person has seen Lucia in *Juliet* or no ? What do I care whether or not she has visited the French plays ?" So with that refuge of the conversationally destitute, the weather and all the other well-known and useful common-places, which are so serviceable as a means of opening a conversation, which we appreciate as we get older and more experienced, and which are only like the preliminary flourishing of foils with which a fencing-match begins : he will have nothing to do with any of them ! He is a great man, who will not condescend to be satisfied with what is good enough for the rest of the world. And so he sits and crumbles his bread, and thinks about himself and his own importance, and is silent ; and all because of this accursed pride, which has got such firm possession of him. Not a pleasant companion, this, for the lady who has the luck to sit next him. Perhaps, upon the whole, not a very valuable member of society ; certainly not worth the dinner which you are foolish enough to give him.

And now, having made due examination of pride as a cause of silence, we come next to a consideration of timidity ; and this branch of our subject

may properly be treated of in this place, one phase of pusillanimity—shyness, namely—being so intimately allied with pride, as it undoubtedly is. Shyness, nervousness, timidity, call it by what name you will, the quality which is indifferently designated by each of the above terms, is as fatal to talk as fastidiousness or pride itself, and its influence is quite as potent in the tying up of tongues. The man who is afraid of his company or of some one special member of that company; the man who is afraid of the sound of his own voice, afraid of interruptions such as we have given specimens of elsewhere; the man who mistrusts himself, mistrusts the subject which he would like to talk about, mistrusts his own power of treating that subject, mistrusts the man opposite, who he thinks, is lying in wait to put him to confusion—the unfortunate person who is thus beset, has certainly but a small chance of ever distinguishing himself as a conversationalist. It is really, sometimes, a very pitiful thing to see a man thus tongue-tied through nervousness and self-mistrust. He sits at table turning over within himself all sorts of things which he would say if he had the moral courage. Some subject is brought up upon which the other members of the company in which he finds himself fall to work busily, supplying an abundance of appropriate anecdote and fluent illustration, to all of which the timid man might contribute something of his own if he chose. Indeed he has some story or remark which would come in now exceedingly well, if he could only persuade himself to give it utterance. But he can't. He is not quite sure. He has misgivings. What he desires to say—could he make it tell? Could he get a hearing with all those people making a noise? Is he quite sure of his facts? And, in this way, he goes on, hesitating and doubting, till at last the opportunity for launching what he has to say goes by, and it is too late—a miserable state of things. This unfortunate, who is silent from timidity, commonly deserves our pity, not our censure, as the proud taciturn does. This last is a wilful offender, but the other is hardly so. He is generally a person who is cowed by a consciousness of his own obscurity; and who feels that, in some way or another, he is at a disadvantage with the rest of the community. The best we can wish him, from our present point of view, is that he may speedily come into a fine property; or that the greatness which, it is to be feared, he will never achieve may, by a combination of propitious circumstances, be some day "thrust upon him," and that so he may get some measure of the confidence which he at present wants.

Next on our list of the causes of silence stands indolence. This, like pride, is a thing which is in some degree under control, and therefore deserving to be severely handled. The action of indolence in keeping a man silent is, however, much less complicated than that of either pride or fearfulness. The indolent man declines to talk, just as he declines to do other things, because it is an effort and troublesome. Conversation, especially in some of its developments, is a laborious occupation, and involves always a certain amount of thought and mental exertion, which is just what the indolent man shrinks from above all other things. To discuss a topic,

or to enter upon a lengthy statement, is an arduous undertaking to a lazy man, and so he shrinks from either one of these two acts. If he does take the trouble of talking at all, it may generally be observed that he chiefly confines himself to asking questions: an excellent method for those who desire to say something, and yet wish to evade the difficulties which belong to the more elevated form of conversation. It is extraordinary, indeed, how much apparent talking may be got through with but a very little exertion, by means of an adroitly conceived and well carried out system of questioning. Almost any subject will do in tolerably skilful hands. The last new novel,—“Have you read it?” asks the slothful one of his partner. The lady replies that she has not, and perhaps may add that she never reads novels. “Never read novels!” echoes Indolence; “you astonish me.” And then he asks if she really means what she is saying literally, or only that she skims such works through without really reading every word. This question answered, Indolence goes on to ask his neighbour if she ever did read novels at any time, and if she did, whose novels they were, and what induced her to give the practice up; whether she disapproves of fiction, and whether that includes all fiction,—what, even Sir Walter Scott? and so on to the end of time. Our friend’s purpose, by the way, is just as well served if this lady *does* read novels. “What! every one that comes out?” he asks. And then, when this question is answered in the negative, he has others ready. On what principle does she make her selection? is she guided by the titles?—with a great many more inquiries of the same sort. It is very curious to observe with how much ability a thoroughly lazy individual will select the subject on which to question the person with whom it is his duty to talk, if possible always choosing one which will involve his companion in protracted explanations. All the time that these are in progress, he is exonerated from the trouble of talking. Nay, he need not even listen unless he likes. It is thus that a thoroughly indolent person will make a pretence of fulfilling his social duties, while he really evades them. Sometimes, however, he does not even make a pretence, but sits entirely at his ease, speechless, and smiling. At such times it is easy to mistake the silence of indolence for the silence of stupidity, from which however, it differs much.

The refinements of this conversational indolence which one sometimes meets with are really extraordinary. Instances have been known of people who have been so completely and entirely in bondage to this form of laziness, that they would hear a statement made all the particulars of which they knew to be perfectly inaccurate, and would yet not dream of contradicting it, because such contradiction would involve explanation, and that explanation might prove to be troublesome. “What a curious thing it seems,” exclaims some lady, addressing one of the conversationally indolent ones, “that Nelson, whose whole thoughts one would have imagined must have been occupied with questions of warfare and naval tactics, should have been able to write a work of a theological nature on the *Fasts and Festivals of the Church of England*.” This remark our lazy man hears and despises.

He knows perfectly well that the Nelson who wrote the *Fasts and Festivals*, and the Nelson of Trafalgar, were two widely different persons ; but he cannot bother himself to explain the difference, and so he lets the mistake pass. Perhaps he even goes so far as to reply, " Yes, it is very curious ; " and then lapses back into silence. Such instances as this have come under the writer's knowledge, and he can vouch for their frequent occurrence.

Mrs. Shandy's indolence was of this sort precisely. " It was always," writes Tristram, " a consuming vexation to my father, that my mother never asked the meaning of a thing she did not understand.

" ' That she is not a woman of science,' my father would say, ' is her misfortune ; but she might ask a question.'

" My mother never did."

There is one other cause of silence, on which it behoves us to bestow a few words, in concluding this section of our subject.

The dearth of speech which proceeds from stupidity is by many degrees the most hopeless of all. Mixed up with the other causes of silence which we have been considering there is generally some element of hope. Pride may by possibility reverse its ordinary action, and so the proud man may be shamed into some attempt to make conversation ; the individual, again, who is silent through indolence, may shake that terrible influence off if he only chooses ; a spasmodic courage may on certain occasions develop itself temporarily in the most timorous bosom. For all these there is hope. Convince any one of them that it is desirable that he should speak ; convince the proud offender that he looks even a greater fool if he sits speechless than if he talks " small ; " convince the indolent man (who is generally good-natured) that it is brutal of him not to exert himself for the general good ; convince the timorous person that after all there is nothing to be afraid of, and that So-and-so, who sits opposite, is only a poor, weak, fallible mortal, when all's told ; once succeed in persuading any one of these that he ought to talk, and it is possible that you may induce him to do so—the silence of each of them being to some extent optional. Only with the stupid man is it *not* optional. He has nothing to say. His conversational exchequer is empty. He would like to say something very possibly, for he is not sulky or morose. He looks about him as he sits at meat for something on the table or the walls which may prove suggestive, but he looks in vain. Then he turns his eyes within, exploring that treasury of ideas which each of us is supposed to carry about with him. Alas ! it is entirely empty. There are no effects ; and he is obliged to remain hopelessly silent, or at least to wait till some more gifted personage happens to let drop a remark which our dull friend incontinently lays hold of ; fondly, but most erroneously, imagining that he will be able to get on, now that he has got a start. The hope is fallacious. He will never get on. The case of the man who is silent from dulness is entirely hopeless, and we can derive no profit from a further contemplation of his deplorable and futile endeavours to find something to talk about.

X.—OF TALK BETWEEN PERSONS WHO ARE STRANGERS
TO EACH OTHER.

Not many months since, the writer of these chapters was having his hair cut at a certain West-end establishment of some eminence, and the day being very hot, and the door of communication between the hair-cutting and shampooing "saloon" and the outer shop being left open, was able to overhear something of a conversation going on, between a customer and subscriber, who had just been going through the hair-cutting process, and the young lady behind the counter whose business it was to receive the money of those persons who had recently been practised upon in the saloon, or to supply them with any articles of perfumery which they might have a desire for.

"Yes," this young person was saying when the writer's attention first became directed to the dialogue which was being carried on between her and the gentleman just mentioned; "yes, I thought to myself, when I first saw you come in, that it was strange you should be in town just now when everybody's away."

"Well, the fact is," replies the subscriber, "that I'm waiting for some clothes which I want made for the sea-side. One's obliged to wait now, on account of the strike."

"You gentlemen are all so particular about your clothes," the young lady says, in a sprightly tone.

"No, I'm not particular," reasons the voice of the subscriber. "I like to be neat. Hate anything that's ill-fitting or untidy."

"Well," coincides the damsel, "I do like to see a gentleman neatly dressed—not to say dandyfied, you know, but what you may call neat. There's Captain Trig comes here very often—perhaps you know him—I always think he's dressed beautiful; just what a gentleman should be."

The subscriber does not pursue the subject of Captain Trig's taste in dress. "I'm going down to Ryde," he says, "when I do get away. My brother—he's at Aldershot—I expect him to meet me there."

The conversation languishes after this interesting statement. "A great many of our gentlemen seem to go to Ryde," the young lady hazards; "I never was there myself, but I've always heard it's a very nice lively place."

Now what, we feel inclined to ask, is the good of such talk as this? Why should a man discuss questions of taste with a young woman who serves behind the counter at a hair-cutting establishment in Piccadilly? Why should he inform her of his plans? why talk to her about his brother at Aldershot, and a variety of other matters? For the conversation here reported is but a very small part of the real dialogue which took place on this particular occasion. It has been curtailed, out of deference to the reader; but in reality all sorts of subjects were touched upon in the course of this shallow talk, and a great variety of opinions came to be elicited, on matters connected with watering-place life, musical and dramatic entertainments, the *Court Circular*, and fashionable proceedings generally.

The fact is, that there are vast numbers of people going about the world who have nobody to talk to. There are some men who have been cut off by circumstances from the possibility of making friends ; some who have, perhaps, been guilty of a rather shy action, which has got them to be looked upon with slight. There are some, again, who have been long away from England, or who are altogether destitute of any qualities which might win them friends, or could keep for them such friends as they may have had at starting. There are middle-aged men who come back after passing the best part of their lives in India or the colonies, who have wherewithal to live comfortably, but are still in this position of being without friends. One set of acquaintances they have left behind them in the distant country in which they have so long resided ; and another set, those with whom they were intimate before they went away, are dead or dispersed. The returning exile cannot find them, or perhaps is shy of attempting to renew an acquaintance the vitality of which has been so long suspended that it may be considered as, to all intents and purposes, dead. This is a dreary situation in which to find oneself, as anyone who has passed even a few months in a foreign town, where he has known no one, will admit. Under such circumstances, a man is very glad to hold verbal intercourse with anybody—with the steward on board the steamer, with the manageress of the big hotel, with the casual acquaintance, picked up at the table-d'hôte abroad, or in the railway-carriage in England. There are times when a man *must* talk, when he feels as if he would go mad if he did not hear the sound of the human voice ; and the remembrance that this is so should make us lenient to these talkative strangers. It is sometimes hard to be so, for, to say truth, their talk generally consists of sad balderdash. It is mostly of the type given above, consisting of many platitudes and commonplaces. Has the reader ever listened to, or taken part in, that vapid kind of conversation which may be called generically railway talk ? “Can you inform me, sir, whether that line is completed between Gooseferry and Duckford ? It will hardly pay, I should think. The traffic used to go round by Waddlebridge, and did very well.” Strangers will talk to each other thus ; or else one of these railway talkers will inform another that “the company must have had to disburse many thousands in consequence of that accident at the Smashford Tunnel,” or that “the line has never paid since the company turned away their traffic-manager, Truckful, thereby losing the services of a thoroughly good and energetic man of business.” Sometimes this railway talk takes an agricultural turn, and the inevitable “crops” are discoursed of ; while, on other occasions, the conversation will be of a more genteel sort, and interesting particulars about the kind of society to be enjoyed in the neighbourhood through which the travellers are passing will be brought to light.

“Do you happen to know,” says one of those most interesting talkers to a fellow-traveller, with whom he has been discoursing about the local magnates, “do you happen to know a family residing in this part of the country named the Osborne Moores ? ”

"No, I do not," replies the person thus addressed, in a tone which seems in some way to imply that he knows every other family in the county.

"Ah," replies the first, "charming people. I thought perhaps, as you seem to know this neighbourhood so well, that you might have been acquainted with them."

"No; I've often heard the name, of course, but it so happens that I've not actually met them, so as to become acquainted." And with this such a conversation will temporarily drop.

A curious kind of covert boasting generally comes to be developed when talk of this kind is once set going between people who have never met before. They seem mutually uneasy till they have convinced each other of their respective claims to be considered persons of distinction. They look at one another diffidently, and each seems to say, "I know you think that I am an impostor and a swindler, but I'm not, as I can prove by showing you what highly respectable friends I have, and what unexceptionable society I am in the habit of mixing in." And with that they fall to work and boast till they almost throttle each other. And this kind of talk is not confined to persons travelling in railway carriages. Far from it. On the pier at the sea-side watering-place; in the porch of the little inn in North Wales, where the tourists congregate; in assembly-rooms, and in the saloons of steamers, this same sort of disastrous twaddle may at any time be overheard by the curious traveller. This kind of talk is the means of eliciting many dreary platitudes and a huge amount of shallow self-glorification.

And deserving of a place among such talkers as those with whom we are now occupied is that group consisting, sometimes, of the different members of a single family, sometimes of a party of friends travelling together, who are in the habit of continually holding forth in public places for the benefit of strangers, without actually engaging them in conversation. One runs against these at every turn on all parts of the Continent, and specimens of them are also to be met with as well in various districts of our own small island. They talk at you. They say things apparently to each other, but which are meant to impress or interest you, and you alone. Thus when mamma tells young miss, across the public breakfast-table at which you are seated, that her cousin Julia was at the Queen's ball the other night, and was very much admired, that worthy matron is not half so much bent on conveying this piece of information to her own daughter as to you, who sit opposite engaged with your coffee and rolls. No one can have travelled much abroad, or frequented any well-known watering-places at home, without encountering a party of this sort. At the head of it there is generally a lady, large and middle-aged, and possessed of considerable force of character; and at the foot of it (quite at the foot), a weak, small, sycophantic papa. There is, moreover, a daughter, and—this is invariable—a friend of the daughter's, who contributes liberally to the expenses of the journey. Sometimes there is a son as well, who is a sort of half-bred dandy on small means. These good

people—who are, by the way, not uncommonly natives of the Emerald Isle—generally do a great deal in the talking way when they come down to breakfast in the public room of the hotel, and when they reveal to each other, quite naturally and artlessly, the contents of their letters just received.

"Did you hear from dear Lady Jane this morning, Louisa?" asks mamma.

"Yes. I had quite a long letter full of all sorts of small woes. You remember that darling little pug which she never would let out of her sight. Well, it has got the distemper, and is likely to die; and dear Jane's favourite mare has fallen down, and done something or other to her knees; and Lady Maria is staying at the Castle, and both the dear children have got the measles. In short, nothing but misfortunes."

"Dear Lady Jane is always so open-hearted and yearning for sympathy," remarks mamma.

"I never knew anyone so ready to bestow it upon others," puts in the friend.

"They are talking," continues the young lady who has had the happiness of receiving the letter, whose contents are being thus made public property, "they are talking of letting the castle for the season, and of going over to winter in Rome, which would certainly be most delightful, as we should meet them there. I shall certainly write and urge them to adhere to the plan."

"There will be a large gathering of the best English families in Rome this winter," says the small sycophantic gentleman at the foot of the table, speaking very solemnly. "It will be most delightful."

Of this sort is the conversation which is engaged in by persons who are in the habit of talking in public. It is not very profitable, nor, one would say, very entertaining, yet to some people—judging by their extraordinary readiness to engage in such talk—it appears to afford a considerable amount of gratification. You get at last to know one of these universal talkers at the first glance. As you take your seat in a railway-carriage or on the deck of a steamer, you detect him at once. He brightens up with a horrid alacrity at your approach. It is in vain that you try to check his first advances. You may endeavour to hide behind your newspaper, or pretend to be absorbed in the book which you have just purchased, but it will not do. You pause, to cut a few pages of your book, or to turn your newspaper over so as to get at the police-reports, and he is down upon you in a moment. He offers you, with a terrible cheerfulness, his own journal, pointing to an article on the state of the country which he thinks you would like to peruse, or he asks you to lend him one of your newspapers which you are not reading. In some way or other, and whether you like it or not, he beats down all the barricades which you have been so careful to set up, and compels you to enter with him upon the discussion of various vapid and uninteresting matters, as to which he is desirous of taking your opinion, or of expressing his own.

Garibaldi's Last Campaign.

It was 5 A.M. on the morning of the 9th September when I entered the splendid *salon* of the Swiss bank overlooking the Lake of Geneva, and found Garibaldi busily occupied in putting the last touch to the resolutions he intended to propose to the Peace Congress, whose first meeting was to be held at noon. He gave me a hearty welcome, asked after my inseparable friend and comrade A., who was sleeping off the weariness of the journey over Mont Cenis, and handed me his resolutions, saying—“Who returns with me must be ready at 9 A.M. on Wednesday.” “Ready for what?” I asked. “Ready to go to Rome.” “I thought we were summoned to Geneva to preach and listen to sermons on peace?” He pointed to the 7th resolution—“Slaves alone have a right to make war on their tyrants.” The Congress opened brilliantly. The grand simplicity of the Electoral Hall, with its fresh playing fountains, the blended fragrance of flowers of every hue, the escutcheons of the Free Cantons encircling the motto, “*Each for all, and all for each,*” the presence of some of the noblest thinkers and bravest doers of the nineteenth century, engendered a frame of mind in which the belief in a future when peace and good-will shall reign supreme, was possible, even easy. Nor did anything occur on Monday or Tuesday to dispel the illusion. On Wednesday, at the precise time fixed at the instant of his arrival, Garibaldi started by train from Geneva, and taking the Sempione route, alighted at the house of Signora Adelaide Cairoli, who in 1859 had sent her five brave sons to Turin from Pavia to fight under Garibaldi for Italian freedom. Carlo died at St. Fermo in 1859, and Benedetto was crippled for life at Varese; Luigi died in Naples, and Enrico received a bullet in his forehead at Palermo. While I write, they are bearing the body of Enrico, killed under the walls of Rome, back to his mother; while Giovanni, the youngest, lies wounded and a prisoner in the secret cell of S. Michele in Rome.

Arriving in Florence on the 15th, Garibaldi heard for the first time of the tempest in a teapot brewed by local ambition in Geneva; learned for the first time, from the English papers, of “his sudden disappearance, his flight before the indignation of the Genevese,” and laughed heartily at the same; wrote a short and scornful denial of the unfounded calumnies, then turned his thoughts and set his face Romewards.

It was well known to him that the proposed expedition was disapproved of by all his best officers. Some, entangled in the web of ministerial complications, were vexed at this interruption of their schemes; others deemed the moment inopportune from a financial and military

point of view. The Republicans felt an invincible repugnance to unfurl any other flag in Rome save that under which their four thousand heroes fell in 1849. Moreover, they maintained that the House of Savoy would not dare to dothrone Papacy and proclaim "Italy—One, Free, and Independent," from the Capitol. Single-minded and tenacious, Garibaldi's line of reasoning was straightforward and intelligible. "It is too late now to discuss the programme accepted in 1859. We are twenty-five millions. People and Parliament have voted one Italy, with Rome for the capital, under the sceptre of Victor Emmanuel. Victor Emmanuel has accepted the *plebesciti* and the formula. In 1860 I was induced to stop short in my liberating career, believing that the unanimous manifestation of the national will would convince Europe of the necessity of allowing us to realize our legitimate aspirations. In 1862 I was shot down on the road to Rome, lest Italy should be plunged into a war with France. Now the French have evacuated Rome, the Romans are ripe for insurrection (even the September Convention does not pretend to fetter that), they claim our promised help. We went in a thousand to Sicily; as many at least will come with me to Rome."

This is neither the place nor the moment to trace the ambiguous conduct of the Government, persisted in throughout, so that all but the initiated believed that the old Cavourian policy of 1860 was dominant. Had there been a resolute determination to prevent a movement in Rome, and to hinder Garibaldi from arousing the provinces, nothing was easier in the undecided state of public opinion than to insure the tranquillity of both; but it was generally believed that if Rome should rise, the Ministry would offer no opposition then to "aid from the Italians to their Roman brethren;" nay, that the regular army would forestall the triumphs of the volunteers by entering the capital, and leaving them scattered through the provinces. Rattazzi's partisans maintain that this was his programme; that the order for the troops to cross only awaited the royal signature, which was indignantly refused, and that this refusal was the cause of the Premier's resignation. Be that as it may, it is clear that to play a Cavourian game, Cavourian skill is needed; and that in the present instance that skill was pitifully wanting.

With the pledge to his friends that he would not cross the frontier until the Romans should have commenced the insurrection, Garibaldi had, by the middle of September, won to his side most of his old officers, whose allegiance to the *Duce* was stronger than their parliamentary scruples; stronger even than their fear of failure. Only the staunch Republicans remained still aloof; at which he laughed mischievously, saying, "The first shot will bring them to the field: a campaign without the Puritans would be indeed a novelty." The warning printed in the *Official Gazette*, on the 21st September, affected him not at all. He was used to "warnings" and "prohibitions" even from royal lips, and as used to their giving place to royal thanks when the forbidden fruit was really plucked.

So at 10 A.M. on the 22nd September we started, a small party, for Arezzo. The people crowded to welcome the "guest waited for since 1849;" and, with the exception of the prefect and his lady, I should say that every man, woman, and child of the populous town sunned themselves in his smile as he sat watching the races in the huge amphitheatre, and awarded the prize to "Constancy," who, after throwing her jockey, outdistanced her competitors, and halted riderless at the winning-post just under his balcony. On the morrow we went to breakfast at St. Maria, the olive-crowned mount on which, in 1849, he had encamped with his four thousand soldiers in his baffled march from Rome to Venice; and after listening with evident satisfaction to the new war hymn of his own composition, set to Donizetti's music, we set out in carriages for the *Val di Chiana*, to visit some friends at Sina Lunga, and to spend a day on Lake Trasimeno. More than once we objected to this journey, to halting in lonely, isolated villages, urging the facility of arrest, the impossibility of resistance; but Garibaldi replied, "We are fifty miles from the frontier; you hear how I answer the volunteers who clamour to be led to Rome,—'Wait till the Romans call you, then hasten to the rescue, you will find me ready to lead:' we are violating no law, we are unarmed; *du reste*, if they mean to arrest me they can do so in one place as easily as in another."

This was a mistake. The prefect of Arezzo, as we afterwards learned, had the warrant in his hands; had gone to Florence to report the impossibility of effecting the arrest without producing a popular insurrection, and had been sent to concert with the prefect of Perugia for seizure of the General at any small place through which he might pass. On the morrow at 4 A.M., Garibaldi was arrested, in bed, at Sina Lunga, and conveyed by carabiniers and a company of the 87th of the line, both commanded by ex-volunteer officers of 1860, towards Florence. At Sesto counter-orders arrived, and he was taken to Alessandria. Just one telegram reached Florence, and one England: at half-past seven the Government took possession of the telegraph offices. Only on the morrow was Italy aware that the Member for Ozieri was in durance vile. Florence warned, rebelled; the people disarmed the National Guard; Rattazzi had a near escape; but for the admirable behaviour of the troops, whom no orders could induce, nor even insults provoke, to fire on the people, the massacres of Turin must have been re-enacted in the streets of the new capital.

I arrived at the fortress on the morrow. When conducted to the General's presence, I was surprised to find him in a filthy den, pale and haggard. I expressed my surprise at the sympathetic language of the soldiery who were his jailors; he said he was aware of the state of feeling in the army, or at least in a considerable portion, but "the time was not come to take note thereof; as a national force it must remain compact, must fight Italian foes unitedly." It was evident to me that he would never avail himself of that element either to effect his own

liberation, or even to hasten the accomplishment of his own immediate views : the last chance of uniting Italy under the existing system must be exhausted before Garibaldi would open his lips to absolve the soldier from his oath. The few words he let fall on that occasion explained to me his persistent reticence, when later, companies, nay, battalions, hung on his lips for a hint, a signal, to join the volunteers. The arrival of "Maurizio" with his bath and baggage put him in good humour, and he slept soundly for half-an-hour, wrapped in a railway-rug, while the commander of the fortress courteously led me to see the apartment just prepared, expressing his regret for the den in which I found the General, alleging as an excuse that they had not been warned who was the coming guest. "Well," said Garibaldi, "have you seen my new cage?" "Yes! and for a cage it is clean, airy, and odourless!" "Yes, but still a cage."

In the afternoon he bade me return to Florence *via* Genoa and Leghorn, to tell his followers to take no thought for him, but to prepare to respond to the faintest Roman call. On arriving at the capital I learned that the mutinous shouts of two regiments of soldiers, besides the Corpo Franco, "To Rome! to Rome with Garibaldi!" had induced the Government to offer him a free passage to Caprera and perfect freedom there: and that following the counsels of certain friends, who persuaded him that his imprisonment would prove fatal to the Roman insurrection, he had consented to embark for Caprera "free and without conditions" (I quote his printed words), "and with the promise of a steamer to reconduct him immediately to *terra firma*."

He started on Friday, 27th September, and I followed him on Sunday, to get several questions settled which could not be well dealt with on paper. In order not to make the eighteen hours' voyage to no purpose, I went to the Minister of the Interior to ascertain whether there would be any difficulty in obtaining access to the General. None! He was perfectly free, but I could only speak with him from boat to boat; he in one, I in another, with a sanitary officer in mine—as Leghorn, owing to the cholera, had a dirty bill of health, whereas Caprera had not been placed in quarantine. "How so?" I asked of the chief of the sanitary department, who had been summoned to give his verdict. "Genoa's bill is as foul as Leghorn's; the General started from Genoa with four companions, and great man as he is, I imagine that if infection can be carried he will carry as much as we pygmies? If the landing of five individuals on the island has not necessitated sanitary precautions, why should the arrival of a sixth compel you to use them?" The sanitary chief looked solemn, said there was *salute pubblico* and *salute pubblico* (moral and material, I suppose he meant); that during the insurrection in Sicily troops had been sent from stations infested by cholera; that Caprera, which could not exist without uninterrupted communications with the Maddalena, had not been placed in quarantine out of regard for the General, but that naturally the exception could not be extended to any one else. So I consented to pass three days and three nights in open boat—

the time that elapses between the coming and going of the mail-steamers—and found myself, with the exception of one poor woman and child, sole passenger on board the *Toscana*.

On Monday at dawn we came in sight of the White House of Caprera: the steamer anchored off the island of the Maddalena; and with the captain, I landed at the sanitary office. On reading the letter I had brought to the sanitary officer from his chief, he said, "Oh! your affair is soon settled. I put Caprera in quarantine as soon as Garibaldi arrived. You will only extend the seven days to nine; we can't mince matters here."

"Then I can go off in a boat at once?"

"You had better send a messenger to warn the General of your arrival, and let him fetch you. If you put your foot into one of these, you will have to pay for the hire, the wages, and keep of two rowers for seven days."

"But," I asked, after despatching a messenger with a fumigated note to the island, "is there no lazaretto here, or at Porta Torres; not even a condemned steamer that would serve as such?"

"Nothing! The nearest lazaretto is at Cagliari. Passengers from infected stations must pass seven days and nights in an open boat. If one is seized with cholera, the boat must be rowed down to Cagliari; and, of course, the patient may die *con tutto il suo commando* on the voyage."

I was staggered by this fresh proof of negligence on the part of the Government towards this island, once the only asylum left to the Princes of Savoy. At Caprera we found the commander of the *Esploratore* on a visit to the White House. The General invited him to his twelve-o'clock dinner. He sat down to the clothless table—where Teresita and her five chubby children, Mamele, Lincoln, Anzani, Anita, and John Brown, with their nurses, were assembled—but ate nothing and looked extremely uncomfortable. If the General was free, why should the *Esploratore* remain on guard? and why should the commander (one of the first who acknowledged his supremacy in Naples) be compelled to pay these daily visits, which savoured of espionage? Already Garibaldi understood that Rattazzi meant to keep him quiet there as long as possible, but counted on the promised steamer, and would not that night consent to a plan of escape which that night alone was feasible. His eyes glistened when I told him that without any disrespect for an particular officer, all his friends and officers had unanimously proclaimed Menotti commander-in-chief during his enforced absence, *salvo* his consent. He signed the proclamation to the Romans, and seemed of opinion that his absence would make no difference to the result—an opinion from which I very respectfully differed, knowing from old experience that only in his presence the jealousies, vanities, and rivalries inherent in volunteer organizations vanished, or at least were neutralized. In the afternoon Teresita took me to the topmost peak of Caprera, she leaping from rock to rock like a young chamois instead of the stately matron that she is, I following as best I could, creeping along ledges and clinging

to the granite for very life. Once thereto I took in all the possibilities of escape, which fascinated me even more than the natural beauties of the countless islands bathed in the rays of the setting sun. Garibaldi was awaiting us somewhat anxiously at the foot of the steep ascent. Once that peak, which can only be gained by an experienced guide, was his favourite watch-tower; the day he left Caprera for Aspromonte he watched thence for the last time. We had a merry supper of fish and kid. The General said that his storehouses and barns were full, that his flocks were flourishing, and that he could support quarantine for a year with perfect resignation.

On the morrow the *Gulnare* cast anchor beside the *Esploratore*; the commanders of both men-of-war paying the General a visit. Dinner and supper passed in silence; even baby-in-arms John Brown seemed conscious that something had gone wrong. "Do you know the day of the month?" asked the General in the evening. I had almost hoped that the anniversary had escaped him. It was the 1st of October. Seven years before, the liberator of ten millions had telegraphed from the Volturno— "Victory along all the line."

On the morrow at dawn the *Sesia*, and later the *Principe Umberto*, with fifty-two guns, cast anchor beside the *Esploratore* and *Gulnare*. "I shall begin to think myself a great man after all," said the General, stroking his beard. Then he gave me minute instructions as to the line of conduct to be pursued. I was to return by the *Toscana*, which would arrive from Porta Torres at 4 p.m., and ask the captain to pick him up, as usual, at the island of St. Maria. "I shall leave Caprera openly," he said, "of course. Italy, whom the *Official Gazette* has told that I am free, must know in what fashion her Government keeps its plighted word. If I am prevented from embarking, or arrested when on board, you will publish this proclamation. Next see my friends, by whose counsel I came here, and tell them that I expect the promised steamer; and finally see X., and tell him to come and liberate me." I bid him good-by, and Basso took me to the Maddalena. The captain of the *Toscana* said that he would await the General at the island of St. Maria as usual, and promising to be ready at half-past five, Basso returned to Caprera, bearing back the news which we obtained, no matter how, that telegraphic orders had come from Florence for no one to be allowed to land at Caprera without special permit from the Government. At 5 p.m. we steamed slowly out of port; the island of the Maddalena rising between us and the route that Garibaldi would take to join us at St. Maria. We had almost reached the north of the island without perceiving any sign of the hostile fleet, and our spirits rose; officers and men were on deck, watching for the much-desired passenger.

"A steamer's smoke! A steamer!"

"It's the mail-steamer from Cagliari," said the second mate.

"It's a French steamer," said the captain.

"It's the *Sesia*," said I. I knew her lines, having passed the day in

studying the four builds through the famous telescope of Caprera. "And that's Garibaldi," I added, "on the upper-deck." The *Sesia* passed us slowly, but at too great a distance for speech. Garibaldi took off his poncho that we might see the red shirt and be convinced. I could distinguish Basso by his side, and his boat and rowers in tow. The island intervening had prevented us from hearing the two cannon-shots and volley of musketry with which the commander of the *Sesia* invited the General on board.

Leghorn seemed decked for a regatta as we approached, so numerous were the boats put out to meet Garibaldi.

"Haven't you brought him? Where is he?" asked the eager friends, scrambling up the steamer's side.

"Not here, certainly," I answered; but whether on board the *Principe Umberto*, or taken back to Caprera, I could not tell. I asked for X. He had taken a cargo of arms into Rome; had been nearly shipwrecked, but had effected a landing.

"No matter," said Canzio, the General's son-in-law, a brave young Genoese, "Viggiani" (we may name him now, as no *sbirri* or *carabinieri* will care to disturb him in his resting-place beneath the cyclamens,) "and I can do all that is possible to be done as well as X."

We went together to Florence, to see first whether the promised steamer was forthcoming. Not even its shadow! The conduct of the Government was growing each day more inexplicable. Menotti had been allowed to cross the frontier, and was at the head of a numerous band. Acerbi was at Acquapendente, and volunteers were joining him openly. Nicotera, in Naples, was at work more openly still. At the same time the Genoese band had been dispersed, and their arms (*all rifles*) seized, whereas the rusty flintlocks of 1806 were being sent over the borders by hundreds, and the Committee of Aid to the Romans was left unmolested. What meant these contradictions? Why was the invasion of the Papal States permitted when the only man that could lead a guerilla war to a successful issue was kept from his proper place? Already signs of dissension among the leaders were manifest; already the volunteers were complaining of hunger, want of ammunition, confusion in the orders issued. All felt the want of that magic presence which could improvise the supplies actually needed, and teach the combatants "to do without" the rest. Yet this was the one point on which Rattazzi stood his ground. By the numerous channels through which ministerial intentions are made known, Garibaldi's friends were given to understand that they might as well attempt a voyage to the moon as try to liberate him; that seven men-of-war, and if needs be, the entire fleet, would guard the prisoner; that nothing short of a miracle could evade their vigilance. That miracle Canzio and the Sardinian performed. Returning to Leghorn, they set out on their perilous expedition on the night of the 6th October. We remained in Florence, and for fourteen days received no tidings of the rescuers. Had Canzio perished, leaving his wife a widow and his five

children fatherless? Then came vague rumours. The General had not been seen for days upon his island. The captain of one of the mail-steamers had been detained and searched; the commanders of the men-of-war were at their wits' ends; all the small fishing-craft of the islands round had been sequestered and pressed into the service of the jailors; still no one knew whether the General was still in the White House of Caprera, or on the high seas, or even landed in the Roman States. The mere fact that he had not been seen gave me no clue to the truth. It had been arranged before I left Caprera that he should decline all further visits from the naval officers; and even Rattazzi had not sanctioned them to force an entrance; so the doubt remained. On the 14th I received a letter dated the 10th. "Tell the Italians that I am, indeed, a prisoner; and with my children and my friends fighting on the Roman soil, I leave you to imagine my state of mind." Up to the 10th, therefore, it was evident that he knew nothing of the attempted rescue. The 19th arrived, and still no tidings; suspense was giving place to certainty; the rescuers must have gone down. But on the 20th I received a line dated, Via ——, Florence, and going to the address given, I found the General and his liberators; he, bronzed and buoyant, drawing a map of the islands, the stations of the guardian steamers, the track of the fishing-boat, and of his own tiny craft. Brief was the story in telling, though its action had taken so long. The fishing-boat had been becalmed, then beaten about the Corsican coast by contrary winds, only reaching the island of St. Maria on the seventh day from starting. Here, leaving the rowers to await orders, Canzio and the Sardinian, procuring a smaller boat, and disguising themselves as fishermen, set out for Caprera. During the night they were surrounded by six armed boats; to the *Chi va là?* of the officers the Sardinian replied in rude dialect, "Fishermen." "You can't fish here," was the reply, and our heroes were landed on the island of the Maddalena, and their boat sequestered.

How the tidings of their arrival were conveyed to Garibaldi, how Teresita managed to take back the answer to her husband, was fired at by the commander of the *Prince Humbert*, and paid him back with woman's shot, it boots not here to tell. Garibaldi's only instructions were, "Get back to St. Maria, take the fishing-boat to Prandicchio, on the Sardinian coast, and await me there." Then he left Caprera alone, guiding his tiny *beccacino* (the worst flat-bottomed toy-boat that ever crossed the seas,) now between the rocks, now through water only a few inches deep, till he reached the Maddalena, where he remained concealed for four-and-twenty hours; then crossed the island on horseback, procured a boat, and reached the north cape of the Island of Sardinia, passed the night in a cave, rode by almost impracticable paths for seventeen consecutive hours, and finally joined the party on board the fishing-boat at the appointed place. Favoured by wind, they reached Vadda, some eighteen miles from Leghorn, on Friday, 18th, and travelling at night by carriage, arrived at Florence on Sunday morning. While telling

the tale, his glee at baffling the guardian fleet, his extreme satisfaction at finding that he was able to endure cold and fatigue even as before Aspromonte, were visible at every sentence.

"But you will be arrested again, General," was my only comment. "Rattazzi has resigned, which is a sign that, if he ever meant any good to the Romans, he has been foiled by one or both of his masters. You know what you have to expect from Cialdini."

His own wish was to start at once for the frontier, as the Roman insurrection was fixed for the 22nd; but as he was still pledged not to cross till that so long-promised event should occur, his friends thought he was safer in the capital than in a small town, and he consented to pass the night in an unsuspected house. At Palazzo Riccardi the utmost confusion prevailed; the prefect of the Maddalena had telegraphed, "Be at ease; Garibaldi is sulking in his own house." The commanders of the fleet were certain that he could not have escaped their vigilance. The friends who had been unable to furnish the promised steamer had prepared a special train. Just half an hour before he should have started, the Florentines not only discovered the truth, but also his whereabouts; and a gigantic demonstration took place under his window in the Piazza of St. Maria Novella. Out by the back-door and into the train, a significant warning from Canzio to the engine-driver, and we reached Terni at 10 p.m., our hearts quaking at every enforced stoppage, and at the inevitable recognition of the volunteers, who were crowding to the frontier by ordinary trains. At dawn on the morrow we started by carriages for the frontier, General Fabrizi remaining at Terni to organize and push on volunteers, arms, and provisions. Ricciotti, just returned from his brother's camp, informed his father that Menotti was at Scandriglia, on the Italian territory, awaiting shoes and blankets. We learned, besides, that Enrico Cairoli and seventy picked men had crossed the frontier to second the Roman insurrection. All along the road we met volunteers, in bands of ten, twenty, and even more. "It is he! It is he! Our Father! All will go well." In order to avoid official recognition, Garibaldi ordered the coachman not to change horses until outside the gates of Rieti; but on approaching the town, the populace, volunteers, and the regular troops rushed forth to meet him. To his intense vexation the horses were unharnessed, and he borne in triumph to breakfast at the house of the chief citizen of the town. Colonels, majors, captains rendered him the military salute; deputations from all the companies came during breakfast to tell him of their one earnest hope to go to Rome together. Some present expected him to answer, "Come now. Come with me." But I remembered his words at Alessandria, and was prepared for his invariable reply,—"Unity, obedience, discipline; people, army, and volunteers. We shall go to Rome together."

Just as we were starting, a Garibaldian, draped in the mantle of a dead Zouave officer, brought tidings of the Roman insurrection. "Barriques at every gate; Zouave barracks blown up; street fights between

the Trasteverini and Papal troops ; the former triumphant ; provisional government proclaimed." "Let us hope that even a tithe of this good news be true," said the General as we re-entered the carriage. "At any rate, it will save our journey to Scandriglia ; for Menotti, shocs or no shoes, will be in march for the frontier."

He was right. Some four miles from Passo Corese we came up with Menotti's rear, and presently with himself. He had heard vague rumours of his father's escape, but had no warning of his approach. As he reined up his horse and bent his head to the carriage-window, he looked like one still dreaming. Father and son clasped hands in silence. Then the General, recapitulating the order given at Terni and along the road, asked, "Have I done well ?" and Menotti replied, "All that you do is well done, papa !"

After some discussion it was arranged to encamp that night on the Italian frontier, to organize the battalions that were marching up, and then make straight for Rome at dawn. At Passo Corese Colonel R. and his battalions "guarded the frontier." Officers and soldiers vied with each other in services to the volunteers and their chiefs. We ascertained that no orders of arrest had arrived, and gave ourselves up to the belief that such a brilliant soldier as Cialdini would not assume the reins of government unless he felt it possible to efface the memory of Lissa and Custoza under the walls of Rome. After posting his battalions and listening to messengers, whose tidings, alas ! by no means confirmed the success of the Roman insurrection, though the fact of the insurrection itself was sufficient to absolve him from his pledge, Garibaldi accepted the only vacant bed in the little inn, and with his sons and officers strewn about the room, disposed himself for a few hours' sleep. At midnight Canzio showed me a telegram received from the Florentino Committee,—"Cross the frontier ; the carabiniers are in march to arrest the General." So we awoke him, and finished the night on the Papal side of the Passo Corese. The warning came none too soon, as the carabiniers were marching rapidly towards the frontier. Still no attempt was made to hinder the volunteers from crossing *en masse*, as Mosto's battalions passed during the night, Frigesy was left unmolested at Monte Libretto, while Salamone's entire column arrived in broad daylight on the following day. In the morning Garibaldi reviewed Mosto's battalions at Monte Maggiore, and Frigesy's at Monte Libretto, and gave the command for the forward march on Monte Rotondo. In the afternoon of that day (the 24th) an awful rumour spread from lip to lip,—"The two Cairoli brothers had been killed under the walls of Rome." Returning to Passo Corese on foot, I met, at the base of Monte Maggiore, several of the fated band who had succeeded in escaping, and their story left no room for doubt or hope. The insurrection was quelled. The dismal story was confirmed later in all its details, save in the death of the younger Cairoli, who was carried wounded into Rome, where he still lies.

At dawn on the 25th the attack of Monte Rotondo commenced, led by

the General, his sons, and Canzio in person. More than one battalion staggered under the murderous fire of the Zouaves from the fortified city walls ; then the Genoese marched up, with Mosto at their head. So he had led them to the front at Calatafimi, where his own young brother and thirty-nine out of a hundred fell ; so at Milazzo, where, reinforced by the survivors of Pisacane's expedition and by others, they were decimated again ; then reinforced again by the flower of the volunteers, who scrambled for entry into this dauntless company, were again decimated on the Volturno. And now in the front fell Captain Uziel mortally wounded, and Lieutenant Guerricci and Dagrino, with a fair proportion of rank and file ; then Mosto fell, his leg smashed with a rifle-bullet. In the Convent of St. Maria we arranged a temporary hospital, laying the first comers on mattresses carried into the eastern wing, and the rest upon straw, till that too was covered, and many had to lie on the bare brick floors. Messengers were despatched for surgeons, nurses, and material. Bravely Dr. Pastore did the work of ten surgeons, and nobly the volunteers risked their own lives in carrying off their comrades ; but many were of necessity left in the houses near the city gate, the fire raging too fiercely there to admit of their transport. The enemy respected nothing ; their cannon-balls and bombs burst in the convent, though the black hospital flag was at once hoisted, and several of the rooms in the western wing were completely destroyed. Once, as I was pleading with a medical student in the ranks to relinquish his musket and come to Pastore's aid, Viggiani espied me, and we shook hands. "You are safe ?" I said, asking after several of his friends. "Safe as yet," he said, hastening back to the city gate. "God grant we have not freed the General to lose him here. We ought at least to live, if only to die in Rome." They were probably his last words in life, as within ten minutes he fell with a bullet through his brain. All day long the battle raged ; the troops were fainting with hunger and fatigue ; we found some corn in the monks' store-room, and kept cauldrons boiling, caught or bought a few turkeys and fowls to make broth for the wounded, but of bread there was none. Certainly they were the liveliest, most patient set of sufferers I ever saw ; the certainty of victory chloroformed their pain. The slightly wounded came in "just to get the blood stopped," and returned ; many that could scarcely crawl waited on the rest. As every fresh relay came in, "How goes the day ?" was the eager question that echoed even from dying lips, followed by that other, "And the Generale, is he safe ?" "Safe and sure of victory," was the invariable reply.

At 6 p.m. the firing ceased, and we were able to succour the wounded at the gate ; hungry and thirsty, huddled together like sardines, they "did not care to be removed ; they knew they should sleep in Monte Rotondo on the morrow." Even at that hour Garibaldi would not leave his post. Once, when listening to a messenger's news from Rome, he ate some boiled corn and washed it down with some of the rare wine of the monks' cellar, into which, I am sorry to say, some of the volunteers had broken,

deeming its contents their lawful spoil. But even this disorder was remedied by a picked guard placed there by Menotti, whose reproofs, like his father's, no volunteer cares to encounter a second time.

Garibaldi had fired the St. Maria city gate, and all night long it blazed up gloriously, while he and his friends spent the night in planning barricades, visiting all the outposts, and the battalions echeloned on the paths and main road to cut off the garrison from their retreat on Rome. At dawn it was ascertained that the garrison had entrenched itself in the Piombini Palace. He entered through the still burning gate at the head of a chosen band, occupied the houses, and attacked the castle, threatening to burn that also. At 11 A.M. the white flag was hoisted, and the garrison surrendered to Canzio; the soldiers were disarmed, and, with their officers, who retained their revolvers and their swords, were sent across the frontier under escort. That night the wounded all slept in beds, or at least on mattresses, furnished by the inhabitants, and the soldiers had full rations for the first time. I read in Roman and English papers of exactions and excesses committed by the Garibaldians. Not a gold or silver coin crossed a Garibaldian palm, as far as the "centro commanded by my son Menotti" was concerned. The rations were regularly furnished by the municipality, and meagre enough they were, as far as bread was concerned, though the meat and wine sufficed. The officers quartered on the inhabitants paid in gold for what they consumed; the fowls, sugar, coffee, and other luxuries procured for the wounded were paid for even as the little carpenter was paid whatever sums he asked for the litters, splints, and bed-rests, which he turned out willingly and well. On the same day commissariat staffs were organized; indefatigable Professor Cipriani came up with a well-ordered ambulance to carry off the wounded to the hospitals he had improvised all along the line, and bright days seemed dawning.

Of the intentions of the Government, we could get no certain tidings; Rattazzi's resignation had been accepted; Cialdini had not succeeded in forming a Ministry. If he failed, it was token clear of French intervention, Menabrea, and Italian shame. But politics in a Garibaldian camp go in at one ear and out of the other. On the day following the surrender, Garibaldi left Monte Rotondo for Forno Nuovo, despatched his staff-officers up to all the bridges to reconnoitre, and learned from them in the evening, that no enemy was visible. In the afternoon A. came back to Monte Rotondo to send on all the troops, the train and the provision waggons, to Castel Giubileo, and whispered in my ear that during the night Garibaldi was to cross the Tiber on a bridge of boats, attack Monte Mario, and second the Roman insurrection again promised for the 28th. But at midnight Y. and Z. returned from Rome to say that the insurrection was impossible. This disheartening statement was communicated only to a few. The General decided on a strong reconnoitring expedition along the Teverone, and the spirits of the volunteers rose with every step that brought them nearer Rome.

Preceding with a few officers and guides the Genoese battalions and

Menotti's regiment, Garibaldi, crossing the railway, took to the hills and halted at Villa Cecchina, facing Rome on its eastern side. About half a mile further on he marked a villa still nearer the bridge with a lofty tower, and said, "We'll mount that tower." Two guides preceded, and just as the General, Canzio, and A., were entering the vineyard which surrounds the *Casale dei Paesi*, the two guides returned, firing their revolvers in the air, in token of danger. One was wounded in the breast, but was able to confirm his companion's tale, that the house was occupied by the enemy, that they had exchanged a couple of shots, and that it would be advisable to return to the Cecchina. A very hair's-breadth escape was that; a few Zouaves hidden in the vineyard would have sufficed to despatch the General and staff. As the sequel proved, twenty Zouaves disguised as civilians had crossed the Namentano bridge, intending to watch from the tower the movements of the Garibaldians. Mistaking the General and his followers for a cavalry patrol, and suspecting it to be closely followed by infantry, they took to flight; so that when on returning to the Cecchina, where the Genoese battalions had just arrived, A., ordered by Garibaldi, marched up a company to take possession of the castle, he found it empty, and occupied it without firing a shot, while from the tower he marked the fugitives scampering across the bridge. Later, Garibaldi ascending the tower with General Fabrizi, who had just arrived, watched a battalion of the enemy come out from Rome and cross the bridge; so leaving Bezzi at the head of a company to defend the castle, he lined the avenue leading thence to Villa Cecchina with the Genoese battalions, and awaited the assault; but the enemy contented themselves with taking up a parallel position on the right of the Teverone and firing harmless shots. Later, another column came out and took up position on the left of the Genoese, who were ordered by the General not to fire a shot.

The same order was given to Menotti, who arrived with his regiments and took up position on an oblong mount on the left flank of the enemy's first column, half of which wheeled round and presented a battle front, the remainder continuing to amuse themselves by firing at the Genoese; and this until 5 P.M., without receiving the honour of a single answer. At midday we heard two tremendous explosions; the Papalini had blown up Ponte Molle. At dusk they recrossed the Namentano bridge, which was mined; and Garibaldi ordered his men to light huge fires all along the hills, and calling A., said to him, "I count on you to see that the countermarch on Monte Rotondo commences before dawn." And A. replied, "An hour before dawn the troops will all be in march." Not a question was put, nor a word of wonder spoken; but we, who passed through the battalions so joyous and confident in the morning, passing the orders as cheerily as we could, failed not to mark the instantaneous transition from too boundless confidence to unreasoning despair—"Return to Monte Rotondo! Turn our backs on Rome! A second exodus from the Tyrol!"—while some, referring to the King's proclamation, asked ironically, "Have the regular soldiers crossed the frontier, and are we

going, like good boys, to place ourselves behind their lines?" Some guessed the truth, and abused the Romans; others again defended them, asked how they were to be expected to rise in the name of a King who disowned them *a priori*, and proclaimed Garibaldi a rebel? It was useless to reason with them; more than useless to discuss. On the morrow the hundreds of muskets found in the fields and on the hills proved that numbers had continued the countermarch across the frontier.

Round a huge fire in the Cecchina Villa Garibaldi passed a portion of the night with several of his officers, and the King's proclamation was discussed in a fashion that will not bear reproduction. One, more audacious than the rest, suggested "that the march on Rome would be shortened by a countermarch on Florence." The General objected his unconquerable aversion to bring troops and citizens in collision; admitted his belief that the errors of monarchy, combined with the persevering steadfastness of democracy, would lead the nation to its true goal without a civil war. Much more was said, but Garibaldi listened on in silence. I think he must have realized that this was the last time the red shirts would follow him under the "cross-stained tricolore!"

An hour before dawn the battalions were in marching order. The General and his staff rode on, A. and a couple of guides brought up the rear, and before they quitted the last positions the enemy's *écreille* was heard. A. climbed a mount to mark the route the troops had taken, and at that moment the enemy's cannon, planted above the bridge, commenced firing on the dying embers of the bonfires kept alight throughout the night. One—two—fifteen shots. The rising sun revealed Rome to him as a remembered dream, and to the enemy the abandoned camp. Thirteen thousand five hundred Papal troops had not dared to accept the challenge of five thousand Garibalдians on the previous day; but now the French had landed, and it would seem that their courage would have sufficed. For a time they hesitated, then cautiously and warily they entered first the Casale dei Pazzi, then Villa Cecchina, where they found two Genoese sharpshooters, whom not even the grenades bursting in the house had sufficed to awaken. They carried both as trophies back to Rome.

Friday and Saturday passed without anything occurring to indicate what our next move would be; the entry of the French troops into Rome was confirmed, and the names of Menabrea and Gualterio sufficed to convince us that reactionary counsels prevailed in Pitti Palace. The General despatched Colonel Pianciani to Tivoli with one battalion, and Colonel Poggi to Marciliani with three, and then ordered the march of his entire force—4,000 men at most—on Tivoli at noon on Sunday. No one thought that the French would actually fight the volunteers: it was expected that they would hold the city, and leave the Papalini free to do their best or worst; and against these Garibaldi felt that he could hold his own. At noon the march commenced—the Genoese battalions in the van, Salamone's regiment bringing up the rear. Just as the General entered the village of Mentana the scouts returned with tidings of the enemy's

approach. In an instant the orders to present a battle front were given and obeyed. A. was sent to collect several companies on the olive slopes on either side the road, and Canzio to reinforce the right wing. The order maintained was so perfect that the enemy reports that, "warned of their approach, the Garibaldians came out to give them battle."

The attack commenced simultaneously all along the Garibaldian front—Garibaldi, his sons, and officers, ever in the thickest of the fray. In the little church adjoining the castle of Mentana, Dr. Bertani established an ambulance, and from noon till two the wounded were brought in unceasingly. All that time the volunteers sustained the charge of the Zouaves with steadfast courage; then overpowered by numbers, they were driven from the olive terraces first occupied, to take up others on the right and left of Mentana. "Recover those posts with your bayonets," cried Garibaldi; and at the bayonet's point the volunteers retook every one of them, driving back the Zouaves and Antiboini in confusion, and with heavy loss.

"The day is ours!" cried Guerzoni—who, on the sorriest steed, was charging at the head of a battalion; while A. led up three battalions along the crest of a hill on the enemy's right, and despite the shot pouring from several mountain-pieces, had brought them to close quarters with the centre. But now immense reinforcements came up; and a sound, sharp, rapid, and incessant—described by some as the running down of a pendulum, by others as the quick beating of a drum—puzzled the oldest hands. They were the eleven per minute *Chassepot* guns, fired by Frenchmen *in propriâ personâ*. The volunteers at best could only fire a shot apiece every three minutes. Numbers of their wretched old muskets burst. Still they held their ground, despite the Chassepots, from three to half-past four p. m. Fortunately for them the Frenchmen were experimenting with their deadly toys; had they been well versed at the precise point to sight their rifles, I scarcely see how a volunteer could have escaped: as it was, most of the bullets whistled over their heads. But even an hour's practice improved the marksmen. The Zouaves and Antiboini, re-animated by their allies, returned to the attack; and over-powered, the volunteers were compelled to retire on Monte Rotondo, leaving some five hundred and fifty men in Mentana to protect the retreat. Until night fell this forlorn hope fought on desperately, then barricaded themselves in the town, and awaited the morrow; nor did the allies venture to disturb them. At dawn the silence in Monte Rotondo convinced them that they stood alone. A council was held, and a capitulation proposed. Even as in 1849, the Frenchmen failed in lealty. With the officer who returned to parley came down a battalion of the 59th, and swept into the French camp all the volunteers from the barricades and from the houses in Mentana, pretending that only those who held the castle were included in the capitulation. The French Colonel refused transports for the wounded, promising that they should have every care. Fortunately for them, Dr. Bertani, who had refused all official position, assumed his natural place at "the ambulance in the front." On the

barricades of Milan in 1848 he commenced his work of mercy for the volunteers, nor quitted them at Mentana till the last wound was dressed, and each patient was placed in the carriages that were to convey them prisoners to Rome. Then, at the head of the column, he marched, under French escort, to Passo Corese.

In the evening (for I crossed the frontier later) I visited the ambulance at Mentana, and found but two poor fellows in the last agonies of death, soothed and tended to the last by one of the ambulance assistants. The hospital of Monte Rotondo was full. The Zouaves wounded on the 26th, whom we had tended as carefully as our own, were still there. Grateful for past kindness, they assured me that our wounded in Rome would be treated as they had been treated: this in presence of their Colonel, Charrette. How fallacious were these assurances, how impotent the promise of the French surgeons, the visitors at St. Onofrio in Rome can tell. But neither the Zouaves nor the French army are to blame. Priestly vengeance is inexorable. Our own wounded in Monte Rotondo, some forty in all, were on the whole cheerful. They imagined that Monte Rotondo had been retaken from Garibaldi even as he had taken it¹ from the Zouaves, and were confident that he "would return in a few days to liberate them." Two of our own doctors had remained to tend them, but nurses were wanting, and these the Zouave Colonel sent. I confess that I shared their illusions until, crossing the frontier on the morrow, A. met me and gave me the following details of the retreat and of the General's arrest:—

As Garibaldi took the road, which, passing outside of Mentana, leads to Monte Rotondo, the French occupied the heights above the road, and fired at the retreating column until it arrived within half a mile of the city gates. Garibaldi then ordered the strong position at the Cappucini to be occupied: the enemy took up his station right and left of the city, fired from too great a distance to do much harm, but killed poor Cantono the Colonel in command, then in about half an hour retired. Fifteen thousand French and Papal soldiers were not sufficient to finish up four thousand Garibalдians. Reinforcements were summoned from Rome. Be it also borne in mind that the enemy dared not venture to reconnoitre on the other side of Monte Rotondo to see if it were possible to cut off retreat; did not, in short, approach the city until the morrow at 9 A.M., when it was empty of all save the wounded whom it was not thought advisable to remove lest the column should be attacked *en route*. What they did succeed in doing was to cut off all communication between Mentana and Monte Rotondo, and the three corpses whom the correspondent of the *Morning Post* found on the road were those of three daring lads who volunteered to take a message from Colonel Salamone to Garibaldi and were shot down from the heights and literally riddled with balls.

Entering Monte Rotondo at half-past six P.M., Garibaldi ascended the Piombini Palace, and manifested his firm intention of defending

himself in the city, but encountered such resolute though respectful opposition from all those who had stood unflinchingly by his side throughout this and other campaigns that he, till then *imperador* among his own, was compelled to bend his head and accept the unanimous decision of men who would have given their lives a thousand times for his, but who dared not accept the responsibility of sacrificing the lives of the volunteers in a struggle which, in no case, could have resulted in giving Rome to Italy, and must have left the General himself a prisoner, dead or alive, in the hands of the French and Papal allies. The ammunition of the only two cannon possessed by the volunteers was totally exhausted, the cartridges nearly so ; the provisions in Monte Rotondo were consumed, and by order of the Italian Government not a single ration was allowed to cross the frontier ; the nearest town was twelve miles off ; hence it was impossible to maintain a siege. With painful effort Garibaldi acquiesced, and allowed orders to be given for the return to Passo Corese, which was effected in perfect order during the night. Once arrived at the station on the Papal side of the bridge, the General strove once more to persuade his friends to gain Monte Libretto, and thence perchance join Pianciani at Tivoli, or Poggi at Marciliani. Probably he hoped to unite all the volunteer forces, and disband them regularly and formally in view of the triple alliance of Emperor, Pope, and King. But his sons and friends stood firm : the regular troops were at the frontier, with orders to disarm the volunteers. Better that they should voluntarily resign their useless muskets to those reluctant hands. Perhaps the fervent appeals of old General Fabrizi—that veteran of Italian conspiracies, the man who had never failed to answer "present" to every revolutionary roll-call, who on horseback on the Mentana heights seemed challenging the bullets to lay him on the battle-field to die—had more weight with Garibaldi than all the rest. He crossed the bridge. The volunteers handed their flintlocks to the silent, awe-struck soldiers. Fabrizi awaited on the Papal territory till the last volunteer had quitted. Then Colonel R. placed a special train at the service of the General, and with his sons and staff he entered it, intending to make straight for Caprera if permitted. Crossing the bridge he had said to A., "Mark my words, they will arrest me ! " but no one, from Deputy Crispi who had joined him on the frontier, down to the most cordial hater of the *Ré Galantuomo*, shared his opinion. At 10 A.M. he left Passo Corese with his sons, Canzio, and the chosen few who had decided him on this step. At every station the people crowded to the station shouting "Viva Garibaldi ! Viva Roma !" He smiled sadly on them, nor expressed any bitterness that they had shouted only, while his volunteers were dying on the Roman soil. At Perugia a dense hedge of carabineers and *stirri* kept off the populace. Crispi telegraphed to Menabrea that the show of force was unnecessary, as the General had decided on returning to Caprera. At Arezzo the *borsaglieri* held the station ; at Figline Colonel Camozzi entered the carriage, and informed the General that his orders were to convey himself and family prisoners to Spezia.

Garibaldi descended, held up his hand in token of silence to his followers and to the populace, who were trying to break through the ranks of the carabineers, and said,—

“ Signor Colonel, have you a regular warrant for my arrest ? ”

“ No, General, only the verbal order.”

“ You are aware, then, that you violate the law ? ”

“ I am but the material executor of the orders of the Government.”

“ The laws are superior to the Government. Every public functionary is responsible for his own acts. I came to the frontier at the head of armed men ; had I pursued my march, not small would have been the embarrassment of this Government—this traitor to the nation ; but I ordered my volunteers to lay down their arms. They entered the State inoffensive individuals. I protest against your intimation, and shall only yield to violence.”

At these words his officers, whose hands had been grasping their revolvers, stepped forward to defend him man to man, but he ordered them to desist, to remain silent witnesses of the unjustifiable violence, so that they might “ reveal to Italy the acts of which its Government is capable.”

Again Crispi telegraphed to Menebrea the details which increased his responsibility. No reply. After vainly entreating the General to enter the carriage of his own accord, Colonel Camozzi ordered four carabinieri to lift him in, and this they did, handling him as they would have handled any lifeless bundle whatsoever ; and with Canzio and Basso he was conveyed to Varignano, whence, after vain endeavours to induce him to consent to voluntary exile, or to return to Caprera “ on conditions,” he was sent back to his island under escort, on account of the grievous state of his health, and there he remains, under the surveillance of Colonel Camozzi and the carabinieri.

My office is that of narrator, not of critic. To those, however, who maintain that Garibaldi turned rebel when, in defiance of warning and prohibitions, he crossed the frontier and waged war on a state at open enmity with Italy, whose ruler stigmatized the King of Italy as a thief and a usurper, I would reply, that in 1860 he waged war on the *ally* of that King, and wrested from him his entire possessions ; that the said King received the possessions of that ally with the conditions annexed by the donor, “ One Italy, with Rome for the capital.”

To those who blame Garibaldi for not exciting the Italian populations to revolt against their King elect, for not enticing isolated battalions to join him without the consent of their superiors, I answer, The unity of Italy is the goal. To reach that goal the Italians agreed to travel by a given path ; that it was necessary to follow that path to its bitter end before any could affirm, “ We have lost our way, and must turn back to find the straight and narrow path that alone leads to Rome and Liberty.”



SMART LONDINE AT LOUVAIN

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The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ON THE ROAD TO ITALY.



"OU'D not guess who our neighbours of last night were, Julia," said L'Estrange as they sat at breakfast the next morning.

"I need not guess, for I know," said she, laughing. "The fact is, George, my curiosity was so excited to see them that I got up as they were about to start, and though the grey morning was only breaking at the time, there was light enough for me to recognize Mr. Longworth and his French friend, Count Pracontal."

"I know that; but I know more than that, Julia. What do you think of my discovery, when I tell you that this same Count Pracontal is the claimant of the Bramleigh estate?"

"Is it possible?"

"It is beyond a question or a doubt. I was awakened from my sleep last night by their loud talking, and unwittingly made a listener to all they said. I heard the Frenchman deplore how he had ever consented to a compromise of his claim, and then Longworth quizzed him a good deal, and attributed the regret to his not having made a harder

bargain. My own conviction is that the man really felt it as a point of honour, and was ashamed at having stooped to accept less than his right."

"So then they have made a compromise, and the Bramleighs are safe?" cried she eagerly.

"That much seems certain. The Count even spoke of the sum he had received. I did not pay much attention to the amount, but I remember it struck me as being considerable; and he also referred to his having signed some document debarring him, as it seemed, from all renewal of his demand. In a word, as you said just now, the Bramleighs are safe, and the storm that threatened their fate has passed off harmlessly."

"Oh, you have made me so happy, George. I cannot tell you what joy this news is to me. Poor Nelly in all her sorrow and privation has never been out of my thoughts since I read her letter."

"I have not told you the strangest part of all—at least so it certainly seemed to me. This Count Pracontal actually regretted the compromise, as depriving him of a noble opportunity of self-sacrifice. He wished, he said, he could have gone to Augustus Bramleigh, and declared, 'I want none of this wealth. These luxuries and this station are all essential to you, who have been born to them, and regard them as part of your very existence. To me they are no wants—I never knew them. Keep them, therefore, as your own. All I ask is, that you regard me as one of your kindred and your family. Call me cousin—let me be one of you—to come here, under your roof, when fortune goes ill with me.' When he was saying this, Longworth burst out into a coarse laugh, and told him, that if he talked such rotten sentimentality to any sane Englishman, the only impression it would have left would be that he was a consummate knave or an idiot."

"Well, George," asked she, seriously; "that was not the ~~suspicion~~ conviction it conveyed to your mind?"

"No, Julia, certainly not; but somehow,—perhaps it is my colder northern blood, perhaps it is the cautious reserve of one who has not had enough experience of life—but I own to you I distrust very high-flown declarations, and as a rule I like the men who do generous things, and don't think themselves heroes for doing them."

"Remember, George, it was a Frenchman ~~who spoke thus~~, and from what I have seen of his nation, I would say that he meant all that he said. These people do the very finest things out of an exalted self-esteem. They carry the point of honour so high that there is no sacrifice they are not capable of making, if it only serve to elevate their opinion of themselves. Their theory is, they belong to the 'great nation,' and the motives that would do well enough for you or me, would be very ignoble springs of action to him whom Providence had blessed with the higher destiny of being born a Frenchman."

"You disparage while you praise them, Julia,"

"I do not mean it then. I would simply say, I believe in all Count Pracontal said, and I give you my reason for the belief."

"How happy it would have made poor Augustus to have been met in this spirit. Why don't these two men know each other?"

"My dear George, the story of life could no more go on than the story of a novel if there was no imbroglio. Take away from the daily course of events all misunderstandings, all sorrows, and all misconceptions, and there would be no call on humanity for acts of energy, or trustfulness, or devotion. We want all these things just that we may surmount them."

Whether he did not fully concur with the theory, or that it puzzled him, L'Estrange made no reply, and soon after left the room to prepare for their departure. And now they went the road up the valley of the Upper Rhine,—that wild and beautiful tract, so grand in outline and so rich in colour, that other landscapes seem cold after it. They wound along the *Via Mala*, and crossed over the Splügen, most picturesque of Alpine passes, and at last reached Chiavenna.

"All this is very enjoyable, George," said Julia, as they strolled carelessly in a trellised vine-walk; "but as I am the courier, and carry the money-sack, it is my painful duty to say, we can't do it much longer. Do you know how much remains in that little bag?"

"A couple of hundred francs perhaps," said he, listlessly.

"Not half that—how could there, you careless creature? You forget all the extravagances we have been committing, and this entire week of unheard-of indulgence."

"I was always 'had up' for my arithmetic at school. Old Hoskins used to say my figures would be the ruin of me."

The tone of honest sorrow in which he said this threw Julia into a fit of laughing.

"Here is the total of our worldly wealth," said she, emptying on a rustic table the leather bag, and running her fingers through a mass of silver in which a few gold coins glittered.

"It seems very little, Julia," said he, despondingly.

"Worse than that. It is less than it looks, George; these tarnished pieces, with a mock air of silver, are of most ignoble origin; they were born copper, and are only silver by courtesy. Let me see what it all makes."

While she was arranging the money in little piles on the table L'Estrange lighted a cigarette, and puffed it in leisurely fashion.

"Julia," said he at last, "I hope I haven't committed a dreadful folly in that investment of your two thousand. You know I took the shares I told you of?"

"I remember, George, you said so; but has anything occurred to make you augur ill of the enterprise?"

"No; I know no more of it now than on the first day I heard of it. I was dazzled by the splendid promise of twenty per cent. instead of three that you had received heretofore. It seemed to me to be such a paltry sum

to hesitate about doing what scores of others were venturing. I felt as if I were turning away from a big fence while half the field were ready to ride at it. In fact, I made it a question of courage, Julia, which was all the more inexcusable as the money I was risking was not my own."

"Oh, George, you must not say that to me."

"Well, well, I know what I think of myself, and I promise you it is not the more favourable because of your generosity."

"My dear George, that is a word that ought never to occur between us. Our interests are inseparable. When you have done what you believed was the best for me there is no question of anything more. There now, don't worry yourself further about it. Attend to what I have to say to you here. We have just one hundred and twelve francs to carry us to Milan, where our letter of credit will meet us; so that there must be no more boat-excursions; no little picnics, with a dainty basket sent up the mountain at sunrise; none of that charming liberality which lights up the road with pleasant faces, and sets one a-thinking how happy Dives might have been if he had given something better than crumbs to Lazarus. No, this must be what you used to call a week of cold-mutton days, mind that, and resist all temptation to money-spending."

L'Estrange bowed his head in quiet acquiescence; his was the sad thought that so many of us have felt; how much of enjoyment life shows us, just one hair's-breadth beyond our power to grasp, vistas of lovely scenery that we are never to visit: glimpses of bliss closed to us even as we catch them. Strains of delicious music of which all our efforts can but retain the dying cadences. Not that he felt all these in any bitterness of spirit; even in narrowed fortune life was very pleasant to him, and he was thoroughly, heartily grateful for the path fate had assigned him to walk in.

How would they have liked to have lingered in the Brianza, that one lovely bit of thoroughly rural Italy, with the green of the west blending through all the gorgeous glow of a tropical vegetation; how gladly they would have loitered on the Lake at Como—the brightest spot of landscape in Europe; with what enjoyment had they halted at Milan, and still more in Florence! Stern necessity, however, whispered ever onwards; and all the seductions of Raffaels and Titians yielded before the hard demands of that fate that draws the purse-strings. Even at Rome they did not venture to delay, consoling themselves with the thought that they were to dwell so near, they could visit it at will. At last they reached Albano, and as they drove into the village caught sight of a most picturesque little cottage, enshrined in a copse of vines. It was apparently untenanted, and they eagerly asked if it were to be let. The answer was, No, it was waiting for the "Prete Inglese" who was daily expected to arrive.

"Oh, George, it is ours," cried Julia in ecstasy, and hid her head on his shoulder, and actually cried with excess of delight.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CHURCH PATRONS AT ALBANO.

THE patrons of the English chapel at Albano were the three great leaders of society in Rome in winter and at Albano during the summer. Of these the first was Lady Augusta Bramleigh ; next came Sir Marcus Cluff ; and last—not, indeed, either in activity or zeal—was Mrs. Trumpler, a widow-lady of considerable fortune, and no small share of energy in her nature.

To these George L'Estrange had brought formal letters of introduction, which he was cautiously enjoined should be presented in the order of their respective ranks,—making his first approaches to the Lady Augusta. To his request to know at what hour he might have the honour to wait on her ladyship, came a few lines on the back of his own card, saying,—“ Two o'clock, and be punctual.” There did not seem to be any unnecessary courtesy in this curt intimation ; but he dressed himself carefully for the interview, and with his cravat properly arranged by Julia, who passed his whole appearance in review, he set out for the pretty Villa of the Chestnuts where her ladyship lived.

“ I don't suppose that I'm about to do anything very unworthy, Julia,” said he, as he bade her good-by ; “ but I assure you I feel lower in my own esteem this morning than I have known myself since—since—”

“ Since you tumbled over the sunk fence, perhaps,” said she, laughing, and turned back into the house.

L'Estrange soon found himself at the gate of the villa, and was conducted by a servant in deep mourning through a very beautiful garden to a small kiosk, or summer-house, where a breakfast-table was spread. He was punctual to the moment ; but as her ladyship had not yet appeared he had ample time to admire the beauty of the Sévres cups of a pale blue, and the rich carving of the silver service,—evidently of antique mould, and by a master hand. The rare exotics which were disposed on every side, amongst which some birds of bright plumage were engaged, seemed to fill up the measure of this luxurious spot, and impressed him with—he knew not what exalted idea of her who should be its mistress.

He waited, at first patiently enough—there was much to interest and amuse him ; but at last, as nigh an hour had elapsed, and she had not appeared, a feeling, half of irritation at the thought of neglect, and half doubt lest he should have mistaken what the servant said, began to worry and distress him. A little pendule on a bracket played a few bars of a waltz, and struck three. Should he wait any longer ? was the question he put himself. His sense of shame on leaving home at the thought of presenting himself before a patron came back upon him now with redoubled force. He had often felt that the ministers who preached for a call were submitting themselves to a very unworthy ordeal. The being judged by those they were appointed to teach seemed in itself little short of an outrage ; but the part he was now playing was infinitely worse ;—he had

actually come to show himself, to see if, when looked at and talked to, her ladyship would condescend to be his patron, and as it were to impress the indignity more strongly upon him he was kept waiting like a lacquey !

"I don't think I ought to stoop to this," muttered he bitterly to himself ; and taking a card and a pencil from his pocket, he wrote :—"The Rev. George L'Estrange has waited from two to three o'clock in the hope of seeing Lady Augusta Bramleigh ; he regrets the disappointment, as well as his inability to prolong his attendance." "There," cried he aloud, "I hope that will do !" and he placed the card conspicuously on the table.

"Do what, pray ?" said a very soft voice, as a slight figure in deep mourning swept noiselessly into the kiosk, and taking the card up, sat down without reading it.

One glance showed that the handsome woman before him was Lady Augusta, and the bashful curate blushed deeply at the awkwardness of his position.

"Mr. L'Estrange, I presume ?" said she, waving her hand to him to be seated. "And what is your card to do ; not represent you, I hope, for I'd rather see you in person ?"

"In my despair of seeing your ladyship I wrote a line to say—to say"—and he blundered and stopped short.

"To say you'd wait no longer," said she smiling ; "but how touchy you must be. Don't you know that women have the privilege of unpunctuality ? don't you know it is one of the few prerogatives you men have spared them ? Have you breakfasted ?"

"Yes—some hours ago."

"I forget whether I have not also. I rather think I did take some coffee. I have been very impatient for your coming. Sit here, please," said she, pointing to an arm-chair beside her own sofa. "I have been very impatient indeed to see you. I want to hear all about these poor Bramleighs ; —you lived beside them, didn't you, and knew them all intimately ? What is this terrible story of their ruin ? this claim to their property ? What does it mean ? is there really anything in it ?"

"It is somewhat of a long story," began L'Estrange.

"Then don't tell it, I entreat you. Are you married, Mr. L'Estrange ?"

"No, madam, I have not that happiness," said he, smiling at the strange abruptness of her manner.

"Oh, I am so glad," she cried ; "so glad ! I'm not afraid of a parson, but I positively dread a parson's wife. The parson has occasionally a little tolerance for a number of things he doesn't exactly like ; his wife never forgives them ; and then a woman takes such exact measure of another woman's meanings, and a man knows nothing about them at all ; that on the whole I'm delighted you are single, and I fervently trust you will remain so. Will you promise me as much ? will you give me your word not to marry till I leave this ?"

"I need scarcely pledge myself, madam, to that ; my narrow fortune binds me whether I would or not."

"And you have your mother with you, haven't you?"

"No, madam; my sister has accompanied me."

"I wish it had been your mother. I do so like the maternal pride of a dear old lady in her fine handsome son. Isn't she vain of you? By the way, how did your choice fall upon the Church? You look more like a cavalry officer. I'm certain you ride well."

"It is, perhaps, the only accomplishment I possess in the world," said he, with some warmth of manner.

"I'm delighted to hear that you're a horseman. There's a mare of mine become perfectly impossible. A stupid creature I took as groom hurt her mouth with a severe bit, and she rears now at the slightest touch. Couldn't you do something with her? Pray do; and in return I'll take you some charming rides over the Campagna. There's a little valley—almost a glen—near this, which I may say I discovered myself. You mustn't be afraid of bad tongues because you ride out with me. Mrs. Trumper will of course take it up. She's odious—perfectly odious. You haven't seen her yet, but you'll have to call on her; she contributes a thousand francs a year to the Church, and must not be neglected. And then there's old Sir Marcus Cluff—don't forget him; and take care to remember that his mother was Lady Marion Otley, and don't remember that his father was Cluff and Gosler, the famous fishmonger. I protest I'm becoming as scandalous as Mrs. Trumper herself. And mind that you come back and tell when you've seen these people what they said to you, and what you said to them, and whether they abused me. Come to tea, or, if you like better, come and dine to-morrow at six, and I'll call on your mother in the meanwhile and ask her—though I'd rather you'd come alone."

"It is my sister, madam, that is with me," said he, with great difficulty refraining from a burst of laughter.

"Well, and I've said I'd visit her, though I'm not fond of women, and I believe they never like me."

L'Estrange blundered out some stupid compliment about her having in recompence abundant admiration from the other sex, and she laughed, and said, "Perhaps so. Indeed, I believe I am rather a favourite; but with clever men—not with the fools. You'll see that they avoid me. And so," said she, drawing a deep sigh, "you really can tell me nothing about these Bramleighs? And all this time I have been reckoning on your coming to hear everything, and to know about the will. Up to this hour, I am totally ignorant as to how I am left. Isn't that very dreadful?"

"It is very distressing indeed, madam."

"The Colonel always said he'd insert a clause or a something or other against my marrying again. Can you imagine anything so ungenerous? It's unchristian, actually unchristian—isn't it?"

A slight gesture seemed to say that he agreed with her; but she was for once determined to be answered more definitely, and she said, "I'm

sure, as a clergyman, you can say if there's anything in the Bible against my having another husband ? "

" I'm certain there is not, madam."

" How nice it is in the Church of Rome that when there's anything you want to do, and it's not quite right to do it, you can have a dispensation—that is, the Pope can make it perfectly moral and proper, and legal besides. Protestantism is so narrow—terribly narrow. As the dear Monsignore Balbi said to me the other night, it is a long 'Act of Parliament against sin.' Wasn't that neat ? They are so clever ! "

" I am so new to Italy, madam, that I have no acquaintance with these gentlemen."

" I know you'll like them when you do know them ; they are so gentle and so persuasive—I might say so fascinating. I assure you, Mr. L'Estrange, I ran a very great risk of going over, as it is called. Indeed, the *Osservatore Romano* said I had gone over ; but that was at least premature. These are things one cannot do without long and deep reflection, and intense self-examination—don't you think so ? And the dear old Cardinal Bottesini, who used to come to us every Friday evening, warned me himself against my impulsiveness ; and then poor Colonel Bramleigh,"—here she raised her handkerchief to her eyes,—“ he wouldn't hear of it at all ; he was so devotedly attached to me—it was positive love in a man of his mould—that the thought of my being lost to him, as he called it, was maddening ; and in fact he—he made it downright impossible—impossible ! ” And at last she paused, and a very painful expression in her face showed that her thoughts at the moment were far from pleasurable. “ Where was I ? what was it I was going to say ? ” resumed she, hurriedly. “ Oh, I remember, I was going to tell you that you must on no account ‘go over,’ and therefore, avoid of all things what they call the ‘controversy’ here ; don’t read their little books, and never make close friendships with the Monsignori. You’re a young man, and naturally enough would feel flattered at their attentions, and all the social attractions they’d surround you with. Of course you know nothing of life, and that is the very thing they do understand ; and perhaps it’s not right of me to say it—it’s like a treason—but the women, the great leaders of society, aid them powerfully. They’d like to bring you over,” said she, raising her glass and looking at him. “ You’d really look remarkably well in a chasuble and a cope. They’d positively fight for you as a domestic chaplain”—and the thought so amused her that she laughed outright, and L'Estrange himself joined her. “ I hope I have not wearied you with my cautions and my warnings ; but really, when I thought how utterly alone and friendless you must be here, nobody to consult with, none to advise you—for, after all, your mother could scarcely be an efficient guide in such difficulties—I felt it would be cruel not to come to your aid. Have you got a watch ? I don’t trust that little pendule, though it plays a delicious ‘Ave Maria’ of Rossini’s. What hour is it ? ”

"Half-past four, madam. I am really shocked at the length of my visit."

"Well, I must go away. Perhaps you'll come and see my sister—she's charming, I assure you, and she'd like to know you?"

"If you will vouchsafe to present me on any other day, I shall be but too grateful; but Sir Marcus Cluff gave me a rendezvous for four o'clock."

"And you'll be with him at five," cried she, laughing. "Don't say it was I that made you break your appointment, for he hates me, and would never forgive you. By-by. Tell your mother I'll call on her to-morrow, and hope you'll both dine with me." And without waiting for a word in reply, she tripped out of the summer-house and hastened away to the villa.

L'Estrange had little time to think over this somewhat strange interview when he reached the entrance-gate to the grounds of Sir Marcus Cluff, and was scarcely admitted within the precincts when a phaeton and a pair of very diminutive ponies drove up, and a thin, emaciated man, carefully swathed in shawls and wrappers, who held the reins, called out, "Is that Mr. L'Estrange?"

The young parson came forward with his excuses for being late, and begged that he might not interrupt Sir Marcus in his intended drive.

"Will you take a turn with me?" said Sir Marcus, in a whining voice, that sounded like habitual complaint. "I'm obliged to do this every day: it's the doctor's order. He says, 'Take the air and distract yourself;' and I do so." L'Estrange had now seated himself, and they drove away.

"I'm glad you've come," said Sir Marcus. "It will stop all this plotting and intriguing. If you had delayed much longer, I think they'd have had a dozen here—one of them a converted Jew, a very dirty fellow. O dear, how fatiguing it is! that little crop-eared pony pulls so he can't be held, and we call him John Bright; but don't mention it. I hope you have no family, sir?"

"I have my sister only."

"A sister isn't so bad. A sister may marry, or she may—" What was the other alternative did not appear, for John Bright bolted at this moment, and it was full five minutes ere he could be pulled up again. "This is the distraction I'm promised," said the sick man. If it wasn't for Mr. Needham—I call the near-sider Mr. Needham, as I bought him of that gentleman—I'd have too much distraction; but Needham never runs away—he falls; he comes down as if he was shot!" cried he, with a joyous twinkle of the eye, "and I bought him for that. There's no drag ever was invented like a horse on his belly—the most inveterate runaway can't escape against that." If the little cackle that followed this speech did not sound exactly like a laugh, it was all of that emotion that Sir Marcus ever permitted himself.

"I can't ask you if you like this place. You're too newly come to answer that question," resumed he; "but I may ask what is the sort of society you prefer?"

"I've seen next to nothing of the world since I left the University.

I have been living these last four or five years in one of the least visited spots in Great Britain, and only since the arrival of the Bramleigh family had a neighbour to speak to."

"Ah, then, you know these Bramleighs?" said the other with more animation than he had yet displayed. "Overbearing people, I've heard they were—very rich, and insolent to a degree."

"I must say I have found them everything that was kind and considerate, hospitable neighbours, and very warm-hearted friends."

"That's not the world's judgment on them, my dear sir—far from it. They are a proverb for pretension and impertinence. As for Lady Augusta here—to be sure she's only one of them by marriage—but there's not a soul in the place she has not outraged. She goes nowhere—of course, *that* she has a right to do—but she never returns a call, never even sends a card. She went so far as to tell Mr. Pemberton, your predecessor here, that she liked Albano for its savagery; that there was no one to know, was its chief charm for her."

"I saw her for the first time this morning," said L'Estrange, not liking to involve himself in this censure.

"And she fascinated you, of course? I'm told she does that with every good-looking young fellow that comes in her way. She's a finished coquette, they say. I don't know what that means, nor do I believe it would have much success with me if I did know. All the coquetry she bestows upon me is to set my ponies off in full gallop whenever she overtakes me driving. She starts away in a sharp canter just behind me, and John Bright fancies it a race, and away he goes too, and if Mr. Needham was of the same mettle I don't know what would become of us. I'm afraid, besides, she's a connection of mine. My mother, Lady Marion, was cousin to one of the Delahunts of Kings Cromer. Would you mind taking the reins for awhile, John is fearfully rash to-day? Just sit where you are, the near-side gives you the whip-hand for Needham. Ah, that's a relief! Turn down the next road on your left. And so she never asked you about your tenets—never inquired whether you were High Church or Low Church or no church at all?"

"Pardon me, Sir Marcus; she was particularly anxious that I should guard myself against Romish fascinations and advances."

"Ah, she knows them all! They thought they had secured her—indeed they were full sure of it; but as she said to poor Mr. Pemberton, they found they had hatched a duck. She was only flirting with Rome. The woman would flirt with the Holy Father, sir, if she had a chance. There's nothing serious, nothing real, nothing honest about her; but she charmed you, for all that—I see it. I see it all; and you're to take moonlight rides with her over the Campagna. Ha-ha-ha! Haven't I hit it? Poor old Pemberton—fifty-eight if he was an hour—got a bad bronchitis with these same night excursions. Worse than that, he made the place too hot for him. Mrs. Trumpler—an active woman Mrs. T., and the eye of a hawk—wouldn't stand the 'few sweet moments,' as poor Pemberton

in his simplicity called them. She threatened him with a general meeting, and a vote of censure, and a letter to the Bishop of Gibraltar; and she frightened him so that he resigned. I was away at the time at the baths at Ischia, or I'd have tried to patch up matters. Indeed, as I told Mrs. T., I'd have tried to get rid of my Lady, instead of banishing poor Pemberton, as kind-hearted a creature as ever I met, and a capital whist-player. Not one of your new-fangled fellows, with the 'call for trumps' and all the last devices of the Portland, but a steady player, who never varied—didn't go chopping about, changing his suits, and making false leads, but went manfully through his hearts before he opened his spades. We were at Christ Church together. I knew him for a matter of six-and-thirty years, Mr. L'Estrange, and I pledge you my word of honour"—here his voice grew tremulous with agitation—"and in all that time I never knew him revoke!" He drew his hat over his eyes as he spoke, and leaning back in the seat seemed almost overcome by his emotions.

"Will you turn in there at that small gate? It is a private entrance to my grounds. I'll not ask you to come in to-day, sir. I'm a little flurried and nervous; but if you'll join a sick man's dinner at two o'clock to-morrow—some rice and a chicken and a bit of fish—nothing more, I promise you. Well, well, I see it does not tempt you. My best thanks for your pleasant company. Let me see you soon. Take care of yourself, beware of my Lady, and avoid the moonlight!"

* Apparently this little sally seemed to revive the invalid, for he stepped up the approach to his house with a lively air and waved his hand pleasantly as he said adieu.

"There's another still!" muttered L'Estrange as he inquired the way to Mrs. Trumpler's; "and I wish with all my heart it was all over."

L'Estrange found Mrs. Trumpler at tea. She was an early diner, and took tea about six o'clock, after which she went out for an evening drive over the Campagna. In aspect, the lady was not prepossessing. She was very red-faced, with large grizzly curls arranged in a straight line across her forehead, and she wore spectacles of such a size as to give her somewhat the look of an owl. In figure, she was portly and stout, and had a stand-up sort of air, that to a timid or bashful man, like the curate, was the reverse of reassuring.

"I perceive, sir, I am the last on your list," said she, looking at her watch as he entered. "It is past six."

"I regret, madam, if I have come at an inconvenient hour. Will you allow me to wait on you to-morrow?"

"No, sir. We will, with your permission, avail ourselves of the present to make acquaintance with each other." She rang the bell after this speech, and ordered that the carriage should be sent away. "I shall not drive, Giacomo," said she; "and I do not receive if any one calls."

"You brought me a letter, sir, from the Reverend Silas Smallwood," said she, very much in the tone of a barrister cross-examining a troublesome witness.

"Yes, madam ; that gentleman kindly offered a friend of mine to be the means of presenting me to you."

"So that you are not personally acquainted, sir ?"

"We have never, so far as I know, even seen each other."

"It is as well, sir, fully as well. Mr. Smallwood is a person for whose judgment or discrimination I would have the very humblest opinion, and I have, therefore, from what you tell me, the hope that you are not of his party in the Church ?"

"I am unable to answer you, madam, knowing nothing whatever of Mr. Smallwood's peculiar views."

"This is fencing, sir ; and I don't admire fencing. Let us understand each other. What have you come here to preach ? I hope my question is a direct one ?"

"I am an ordained minister of the Church of England, madam ; and when I have said so, I have answered you."

"What, sir ? do you imagine your reply is sufficient in an age when not alone every doctrine is embraced within the Church, but that there is a very large and increasing party who are prepared to have no doctrine at all ? I perceive, sir, I must make my approaches to you in a different fashion. Are you a man of vestments, gesticulations, and glass windows ? Do you dramatize your Christianity ?"

"I believe I can say no, madam, to all these."

"Are you a Literalist, then ? What about Noah, sir ? Let me hear what you have to say about the Flood. Have you ever calculated what forty days' rainfall would amount to ? Do you know that in Assam, where the rains are the heaviest in that part of the world, and in Colon, in South America, no twelve hours' rain ever passed five inches and three-quarters ? You are, I am sure, acquainted with Eschschormes' book on the Nile deposits ? If not, sir, it is yonder—at your service. Now, sir, we shall devote this evening to the Deluge, and, so far as time permits, the age of the earth. To-morrow evening we'll take Moses, on Staub's suggestion that many persons were included under that name. We'll keep the Pentateuch for Friday, for I expect the Rabbi Bensi will be here by that time."

"Will you pardon me, madam," said L'Estrange, rising, "if I decline entering upon all discussion of these momentous questions with you ? I have no such scholarship as would enable me to prove instructive, and I have conviction sufficiently strong, in my faith in other men's learning, to enable me to reject quibbles and be unmoved by subtleties. Besides," added he, in a sharper tone, "I have come here to have the honour of making your acquaintance, and not to submit myself to an examination. May I wish you a good-evening ?"

How he took his leave, how he descended the stairs, and rushed into the street, and found his way to the little inn where his sister wearily was waiting dinner for him, the poor curate never knew to the last day of his life.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A SMALL LODGING AT LOUVAIN.

In a very humble quarter of the old town of Louvaine, at the corner of La Rue des Moines, Augustus Bramleigh and his sister had taken up their lodgings. Madame Jervasso, the proprietress of the house, had in her youth been the femme-de-chambre of some high-born dame of Brussels, and offered her services in the same capacity to Ellen, while with the aid of her own servant she prepared their meals, thus at once supplying the modest requirements they needed. Augustus Bramleigh was not a very resolute or determined man, but his was one of those natures that acquire solidity from pressure. When once he found himself on the road of sacrifices, his self-esteem imparted vigour and energy to his character. In the ordinary course of events he was accustomed to hold himself—his abilities and his temperament—cheaply enough. No man was ever less self-opinionated or self-confident. If referred to for advice, or even for opinion, he would modestly decline the last, and say, "Marion or Temple perhaps could help you here." He shrank from all self-assertion whatever, and it was ever a most painful moment to him when he was presented to any one as the future head of the house and the heir to the Bramleigh estates. To Ellen, from whom he had no secrets, he had often confessed how he wished he had been a younger son. All his tastes and all his likings were those to be enjoyed by a man of moderate fortune, and an ambition even smaller than that fortune. He would say, too, half-jestingly, "With such aspiring spirits amongst us as Marion and Temple, I can afford myself the luxury of obscurity. *They* are sure to carry our banner loftily, and *I* may with safety go on my humble path unnoticed."

Jack had always been his favourite brother: his joyous nature, his sailor-like frankness, his spirit, and his willingness to oblige, contrasted very favourably with Temple's sedate, cautious manner, and the traces of a selfishness that never forgot itself. Had Jack been the second son instead of the youngest, Augustus would have abdicated in his favour at once, but he could not make such a sacrifice for Temple. All the less that the very astute diplomatist continually harped on the sort of qualities which were required to dispense an ample fortune, and more than insinuated how much such a position would become himself, while another might only regard it as a burden and a worry. It was certainly a great shock to him to learn that there was a claimant to his family fortune and estate: the terrible feeling that they were to appear before the world as impostors,—holding a station and dispensing a wealth to which they had no right,—almost overcame him. The disgrace of a public exposure, the notoriety it would evoke, were about the most poignant sufferings such a man could be brought to endure. He to whom a newspaper comment, a mere passing notice of his name, was a source of pain and annoyance; that he should

figure in a great trial and his downfall be made the theme of moral reflections in a leading article ! How was this to be borne ? What could break the fall from a position of affluence and power to a condition of penury and insignificance ? Nothing—if not the spirit which by meeting disaster half-way, seemed at least to accept the inevitable with courage, and so carry a high heart in the last moments of defeat.

Augustus well knew what a mistaken estimate the world had ever formed of his timid, bashful nature, and this had given his manner a semblance of pride and hauteur which made the keynote of his character. It was all in vain that he tried to persuade people that he had not an immeasurable self-conceit. They saw it in his every word and gesture, in his coolness when they approached him, in his almost ungraciousness when they were courteous to him. "Many will doubtless declare," said he, "that this reverse of fortune is but a natural justice on one who plumed himself too much on his prosperity, and who arrogated too far on the accident of his wealth. If so I can but say they will not judge me fairly. They will know nothing of where my real suffering lies. It is less the loss of fortune I deplore, than the world's judgment on having so long usurped that we had no right to."

From the day he read Sedley's letter and held that conversation with the lawyer, in which he heard that the claimant's case seemed a very strong one, and that perhaps the Bramleighs had nothing to oppose to it of so much weight as the great fact of possession—from that hour he took a despairing view of the case. There are men who at the first reverse of fortune throw down their cards and confess themselves beaten. There are men who can accept defeat itself better than meet the vacillating events of a changeful destiny ; who have no persistence in their courage, nor any resources to meet the coming incidents of life. Augustus Bramleigh possessed a great share of this temperament. It is true that Sedley after much persuasion induced him to entertain the idea of a compromise, carefully avoiding the use of that unhappy word, and substituting for it the less obnoxious expression "arrangement." Now this same arrangement, as Mr. Sedley put it, was a matter which concerned the Bramleighs collectedly :—seeing that if the family estates were to be taken away, nothing would remain to furnish the provision for younger children. "You must ascertain what your brothers will do," wrote Sedley; "you must inquire how far Lord Culduff—who through his marriage has a rent-charge on the estate—will be willing to contribute to an 'arrangement.'"

Nothing could be less encouraging than the answer this appeal called forth. Lord Culduff wrote back in the tone of an injured man, all but declaring that he had been regularly taken in ; indeed, he did not scruple to aver that it had never been his intention to embark in a ship that was sure to founder, and he threw out something like a rebuke on the indelicacy of asking him to add to the sacrifice he had already made for the honour of being allied to them.

Temple's note ran thus :—

"DEAR GUSTY,—If your annoyances have not affected your brain, I am at a loss for an explanation of your last letter. How, I would ask you, is a poor secretary of legation to subsist on the beggarly pittance F. O. affords him? Four hundred and fifty per annum is to supply rent, clothes, club expenses, a stall at the opera, and one's little charities in perhaps one of the dearest capitals in Europe. So far from expecting the demand you have made upon me, I actually, at the moment of receiving yours, had a half-finished note on my writing-table asking you to increase my poor allowance. When I left Castello, I think you had sixteen horses. Can you possibly want more than two for the carriage and one for your own riding? As to your garden and greenhouse expenses, I'll lay ten to one your first peas cost you a guinea a quart, and you never saw a pine at your table under five-and-twenty pounds; and now that I am on the theme of reduction, I would ask what do you want with a chef at two hundred and fifty a year? Do you, or does Ellen, ever eat of anything but the simplest diet at table? Don't you send away the entrées every day, wait for the roast gigot, or the turkey or the woodcocks, and in consequence, does not M. Grégoire leave the cookery to be done by one of his 'aides,' and betake himself to the healthful pursuit of snipe-shooting, and the evening delight of Mrs. Somebody's tea at Portshandon? Why not add this useless extravagance to the condemned list of the vineries, the stable, and the score of other extraordinaries, which an energetic hand would reduce in half-an-hour?

"I'm sure you'll not take it in ill part that I bring these things under your notice. Whether out of the balance in hand you will give me five hundred a year, or only three, I shall ever remain

"Your affectionate brother,

"TEMPLE EDGERTON BRAMLEIGH."

"Read that, Nelly," said Augustus, as he threw it across the table.
"I'm almost afraid to say what I think of it."

This was said as they sat in their little lodging in the Rue des Moines: for the letter had been sent through an embassy-bag, and consequently had been weeks on the road, besides lying a month on a tray in the Foreign Office till some idle lounging had taken the caprice to forward it.

"Where does he write from?"

"Her Majesty's Legation at Munich. Lord Culduff is there special, and Temple is acting as secretary to him."

"And does Marion send no message?"

"Oh, yes. She wants all the trunks and carriage-boxes which she left at Castello to be forwarded to town for transmission abroad. I don't think she remembers us much further. She hopes I will not have her old mare sold, but make arrangements for her having a free paddock for the rest of her life, and she adds that you ought to take the pattern of the slipper on her side-saddle, for if it should happen that you ever ride again, you'll find it better than any they make now."

"Considerate at all events. They tell us that love alone remembers trifles. Isn't this a proof of it, Gusty?"

"Read Temple now, and try to put me in better temper with him than I feel at this moment."

"I couldn't feel angry with Temple," said she, quietly. "All he does and all he says so palpably springs from consideration of self, that it would be unjust to resent in him what one would not endure from another. In fact, he means no harm to any one, and a great deal of good to Temple Bramleigh."

"And you think that commendable?"

"I have not said so; but it certainly would not irritate me."

She opened the letter after this and read it over leisurely.

"Well, and what do you say now, Nelly?" asked he.

"That it's Temple all over; he does not know why in this shipwreck every one is not helping to make a lifeboat for him. It seems such an obvious and natural thing to do that he regards the omission as scarcely credible."

"Does he not see—does he not care for the ruin that has overtaken us?"

"Yes, he sees it, and is very sorry for it, but he opines, at the same time, that the smallest amount of the disaster should fall to his share. Here's something very different," said she, taking a letter from her pocket. "This is from Julia. She writes from her little villa at Albano, and asks us to come and stay with them."

"How thoroughly kind and good-natured."

"Was it not, Gusty? She goes over how we are to be lodged, and is full of little plans of pleasure and enjoyment; she adds too, what a benefit you would be to poor George, who is driven half wild with the meddlesome interference of the Church magnates. They dictate to him in everything, and a Mrs. Trumper actually sends him the texts on which she desires him to hold forth,—while Lady Augusta persecutes him with projects in which theological discussion, as she understands it, is to be carried on in rides over the Campagna, and picnics to the hills behind Albano. Julia says that he will not be able to bear it, without the comfort and companionship of some kind friend, to whom he can have recourse in his moments of difficulty."

"It would be delightful to go there, Nelly, but it is impossible."

"I know it is," said she gravely.

"We could not remove so far from England while this affair is yet undetermined. We must remain where we can communicate easily with Sedley."

"There are scores of reasons against the project," said she, in the same grave tone. "Let us not speak of it more."

Augustus looked at her, but she turned away her face and he could only mark that her cheeks and throat were covered with a deep blush.

"This part of Julia's letter is very curious," said she, turning to the

last page. "They were stopping at a little inn one night where Pracontal and Longworth arrived, and George by a mere accident heard Pracontal declare that he would have given anything to have known you personally, that he desired above everything to be received by you on terms of friendship, and even of kindred; that the whole of this unhappy business could have been settled amicably, and in fact, he never ceased to blame himself for the line into which his lawyer's advice had led him, while all his wishes tended to an opposite direction."

"But Sedley says he has accepted the arrangement, and abandoned all claim in future."

"So he has, and it is for that he blames himself. He says it debars him from the noble part he desired to take."

"I was no part to this compromise, Nelly, remember that. I yielded to reiterated entreaty a most unwilling assent, declaring always that the law must decide the case between us, and the rightful owner have his own. Let not Mr. Pracontal imagine that all the high-principled action is on his side: from the very first I declared that I would not enjoy for an hour what I did not regard undisputedly as my own. You can bear witness to this, Nelly. I simply assented to the arrangement, as they called it, to avoid unnecessary scandal. What the law shall decide between us, need call forth no evil passions or ill-will. If the fortune we had believed our own belongs to another, let him have it." The tone of high excitement in which he spoke plainly revealed how far a nervous temperament and a susceptible nature had to do with his present resolve. Nelly had seen this before, but never so fully revealed as now. She knew well the springs which could move him to acts of self-sacrifice and devotion, but she had not thoroughly realized to herself that it was in a paroxysm of honourable emotion he had determined to accept the reverse of fortune, which would leave him penniless in the world.

"No, Nelly!" said he, as he arose and walked the room, with head erect, and a firm step. "We shall not suffer these people who talk slightlying of the newly risen gentry to have their scoff unchallenged! It is the cant of the day to talk of mercantile honour and City notions of what is high-minded and right, and I shall show them that we—'Lombard Street people,' as some newspaper scribe called us the other day—that we can do things the proudest earl in the Peerage would shrink back from as from a sacrifice he could not dare to face. There can be no sneer at a class that can produce men who accept beggary rather than dishonour. As that Frenchman said, these habits of luxury and splendour were things he had never known,—the want of them would leave no blank in his existence. Whereas to us they were the daily accidents of life—they entered into our ways and habits, and made part of our very natures; giving them up was like giving up ourselves, surrendering an actual identity! You saw our distinguished connection, Lord Culduff, how he replied to my letter—a letter, by the way, I should never have stooped to write—but Sedley had my ear at the time and influenced me against my own convictions.

The noble viscount, however, was free from all extraneous pressure, and he told us as plainly as words could tell it, that he had paid heavily enough already for the honour of being connected with us, and had no intention to contribute another sacrifice. As for Temple—I won't speak of him: poor Jack, how differently he would have behaved in such a crisis."

Happy at the opportunity to draw her brother away, even passingly, from a theme that seemed to press upon him unceasingly, she drew from the drawer of a little work-table a small photograph and handed it to him, saying, "Is it not like?"

"Jack!" cried he. "In a sailor's jacket too! what is this?"

"He goes out as a mate to China," said she calmly. "He wrote me but half a dozen lines, but they were full of hope and cheerfulness; he said that he had every prospect of getting a ship, when he was once out; that an old messmate had written to his father—a great merchant at Shanghai—about him, and that he had not the slightest fears for his future."

"Would any one believe in a reverse so complete as this?" cried Augustus, as he clasped his hands before him. "Who ever heard of such ruin in so short a time?"

"Jack certainly takes no despairing view of life," said she quietly.

"What! does he pretend to say it is nothing to descend from his rank as an officer of the navy, with a brilliant prospect before him, and an affluent connection at his back, to be a common sailor, or at best one grade removed from a common sailor, and his whole family beggared? Is this the picture he can afford to look on with pleasure or with hope! The man who sees in his downfall, no sacrifice, or no degradation, has no sympathy of mine. To tell me that he is stout-hearted is absurd, he is simply unfeeling." Nelly's face and even her neck became crimson, and her eyes flashed indignantly; but she repressed the passionate words that were almost on her lips, and taking the photograph from him replaced it in the drawer and turned the key.

"Has Marion written to you?" asked he after a pause.

"Only a few lines. I'm afraid she's not very happy in her exalted condition after all, for she concluded with these words: 'It is a cruel blow that has befallen you, but don't fancy that there are not miseries as hard to bear in life as those which display themselves in public and flaunt their sufferings before the world.'"

"That old fop's temper perhaps is hard to bear with," said he carelessly.

"You must write to George L'Estrange, Gusty," said she coaxingly. "There are no letters he likes so much as yours. He says you are the only one who ever knew how to advise without taking that tone of superiority that is so offensive, and he needs advice just now—he is driven half wild with dictation and interference." She talked on in this strain for some time, till he grew gradually calmer, and his features losing their look of intensity and eagerness, regained their ordinary expression of gentleness and quiet.

"Do you know what was passing through my mind just now?" said he, smiling half sadly. "I was wishing it was George had been Marion's husband instead of Lord Culduff. We'd have been so united, the very narrowness of our fortunes would have banded us more closely together, and I believe, firmly believe, we might have been happier in these days of humble condition, than ever we were in our palmy ones: do you agree with me, Nelly?"

Her face was now crimson, and if Augustus had not been the least observant of men, he must have seen how his words had agitated her. She merely said with affected indifference: "Who can tell how these things would turn out? There's a nice gleam of sunlight, Gusty. Let us have a walk. I'll go for my hat."

She fled from the room before he had time to reply, and the heavy clap of a door soon told that she had reached her chamber.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AT LOUVAIN.

THERE are few delusions more common with well-to-do people than the belief that if "put to it" they could earn their own livelihood in a variety of ways. Almost every man has some two or three or more accomplishments which he fancies would be quite adequate to his support, and remembering with what success the exercise of these gifts has ever been hailed in the society of his friends, he has a sort of generous dislike to be obliged to eclipse some poor drudge of a professional, who, of course, will be consigned to utter oblivion, after his own performance.

Augustus Bramleigh was certainly not a conceited, or a vain man, and yet he had often in his palmy days imagined how easy it would be for him to provide for his own support: he was something of a musician, he sang pleasingly, he drew a little, he knew something of three or four modern languages, he had that sort of smattering acquaintance with questions of religion, politics, and literature, which the world calls being "well-informed;" and yet nothing short of the grave necessity revealed to him that, towards the object of securing a livelihood, a cobbler in his bulk was out and out his master.

The world has no need of the man of small acquirements, and would rather have its shoes mended by the veriest botch of a professional than by the cleverest amateur that ever studied a Greek sandal.

"Is it not strange, Nelly, that Brydges and Bowes won't take those songs of mine," said he one morning as the post brought him several letters. "They say they are very pretty, and the accompaniments full of taste, but so evidently wanting in originality—such palpable imitations of Gordigiani and Romani—they would meet no success. I ask you, Nelly, am I the man to pilfer from any one. Is it likely I would trade on another man's intellect?"

"That you certainly are not, Gusty! but remember who it is that

utters this criticism. The man who has no other test of goodness but a ready sale, and he sees in this case little hope of such."

"Rankin too refuses my 'Ghost Story'; he calls it too German, whatever that may mean."

"It means simply that he wants to say something and is not very clear what it ought to be. And your water-colour sketch—the Street in Bruges?"

"Worst of all," cried he, interrupting. "Dinetti, with whom I have squandered hundreds for prints and drawings, sends it back with these words in red chalk on the back:—"No distance; no transparency; general muddiness—a bad imitation of Prout's worst manner."

"How unmannerly; how coarse!"

"Yes; these purveyors to the world's taste don't mince matters with their journeymen. They remind them pretty plainly of their shortcomings; but considering how much of pure opinion must enter into these things, they might have uttered their judgments with more diffidence."

"They may not always know what is best, Gusty; but I take it, they can guess very correctly as to what the public will think best."

"How humiliating it makes labour when one has to work to please a popular taste. I always had fancied that the author, or the painter, or the musician, stood on a sort of pedestal, to the foot of which came the publisher, entreating that he might be permitted to catch the utterings of genius, and become the channel through which they should flow into an expectant world; and now I see it is the music-seller, or the print-seller is on the pedestal, and the man of genius kneels at his feet and prays to be patronized."

"I am sure, Gusty," said she, drawing her arm within his, as he stood at the window, "I am sure we must have friends who would find you some employment in the public service that you would not dislike, and you would even take interest in. Let us see first what we could ask for."

"No; first let us think of whom we could ask for it."

"Well, be it so. There is Sir Francis Deighton; isn't he a Cabinet Minister?"

"Yes. My father gave him his first rise in life; but I'm not sure they kept up much intimacy later on."

"I'll write to him, Gusty; he has all the Colonial patronage and could easily make you governor of something to-morrow. Say 'yes'; tell me I may write to him."

"It's not a pleasant task to assign you, dear Nelly," said he, with a sad smile; "and yet I feel you will do it better than I should."

"I shall write," said she, boldly, "with the full assurance that Sir Francis will be well pleased to have an opportunity to serve the son of an old friend and benefactor."

"Perhaps it is that my late defeats have made me cowardly—but I own, Nelly, I am less than hopeful of success."

"And I am full of confidence. Shall I show you my letter when I have written it?"

"Better not, Nelly. I might begin to question the prudence of this, or the taste of that, and end by asking you to suppress it all. Do what you like then, and in your own way."

Nelly was not sorry to obtain permission to act free of all trammels, and went off to her room to write her letter. It was not till after many attempts that she succeeded in framing an epistle to her satisfaction. She did not wish—while reminding Sir Franics of whom it was she was speaking—to recall to him any unpleasant sentiment of an old obligation: she simply adverted to her father's long friendship for him, but dropped nothing of his once patronage. She spoke of their reverse in fortune with dignity, and in the spirit of one who could declare proudly that their decline in station involved no loss of honour, and she asked that some employment might be bestowed on her brother, as upon one well deserving of such a charge.

"I hope there is nothing of the suppliant in all this?" "I hope it is such a note as Gusty would have approved of, and that my eagerness to succeed has involved me in no undue humility." Again and again she read it over; revising this, and changing that, till at length grown impatient, she folded it up and addressed it, saying aloud: "There, it is in the chance humour of him who reads, not in the skill of the writer, lies the luck of such epistles."

"You forgot to call him Right Honourable, Nelly," said Augustus, as he looked at the superscription.

"I'm afraid I've forgotten more than that, Gusty; but let us hope for the best."

"What did you ask for?"

"Anything,—whatever he can give you, and is disposed to give, I've said. We are in that category where the proverb says—there is no choice."

"I'd not have said that, Nelly."

"I know that, and it is precisely on that account that I said it for you. Remember, Gusty, you changed our last fifty pounds in the world yesterday."

"That's true," said he, sitting down near the table, and covering his face with both hands.

"There's a gentleman belowstairs, madam, wishes to know if he could see Mr. Bramleigh," said the landlady entering the room.

"Do you know his name?" said Nelly, seeing that as her brother paid no attention to the announcement, it might be as well not to admit a visitor.

"This is his card, madam."

"Mr. Cutbill!" said Nelly, reading aloud. "Gusty," added she, bending over him, and whispering in his ear, "would you see Mr. Cutbill?"

"I don't care to see him," muttered he, and then rising he added: "Well, let him come up; but mind, Nelly, we must on no account ask him to stay and dine with us."

She nodded assent, and the landlady retired to introduce the stranger.

The Three Lyrists ; Horace, Burns, and Béranger.

The mystical fascination which the Number Three used to exercise over the human mind, receives some excuse from interesting facts in the history of literature. Thus, there are three supreme epic poets, Homer, Virgil, and Milton. There are three masters of Greek tragedy, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. There are three unrivalled satirists, Aristophanes, Rabelais, and Swift. And there are three lyrists, who stand out in the annals of song, enjoying a popularity beyond all competition,—Horace, Burns, and Béranger. It is with the last triad that our business lies at present. It seems to us that each of them may be better understood if all three be compared together; and that whatever essential similarity can be shown to exist between them, will tend to throw light on the lyrical character and the lyrical genius.

The points of coincidence in the condition and temperament of these men of different nations, are curious, to begin with. They were all of humble degree by birth, yet more or less fortunate in some circumstances of their training. They were all, for parts of their career, in Government employment. They all early found patrons among men of rank. They all held a kind of mixed politics, the result of the fluctuations of the ages in which they lived. They all enjoyed popularity during their lifetimes. All three were strongly susceptible of religious impressions, but hostile to prevailing dogmatism and superstition; keenly alive to the love of friends, and the charm of women; deeply tinged with melancholy, though cheerful at ordinary times, and hilarious on festal occasions. All were patriotic to a degree exceeding the zeal of common men. And though the basis of their genius in each case was a gift of creative spontaneity which defies analysis, they all alike worked on traditional material, literary and musical; and worked on it in the true artistic spirit,—with much love of form, finish, symmetry, and grace. Finally, what is profoundly significant, these three song-writers all began with satire,—a thoroughly humorous vein of satire being common to the group.

In order to draw out this parallel with any fulness, it will be best that we should take a glance at each of our lyrists separately. Béranger has been little discussed in England, considering his European celebrity, and the material illustrative of him at the disposal of students. Horace and Burns are more talked of; but the latest views regarding even these poets are far from being as generally known as some people suppose.

It is a strange thing to reflect upon, that Horace, who died one winter's day just eighteen hundred and seventy-five years ago, should have more readers even yet, than either Burns or Béranger. We

apprehend, however, that this admits of no doubt. It is another piquant fact of the kind, that even these evergreen classical reputations have their good and bad seasons,—their periods of fashion and of neglect. In the eighteenth century, we hear of Horace everywhere, from the pulpit to the ball-room. But for many years after our own century opened, he was no longer the mode. He ceased, as Niebuhr says, to have justice done him ; and in the lectures which Niebuhr delivered at Bonn in 1828-9, that great scholar protested against the reaction. Since then, there has been a highly active Horatian movement in literature. Hofman Peerikamp, a Dutch professor of great distinction, gave an impulse to this, in an unusual way. He issued, in 1888, a work, the object of which was to show that a good deal of the present text of Horace is spurious and supposititious. Such audacity roused the Germans, and the subject can hardly be said to have gone to sleep again yet. But the revival extended beyond the province of criticism, strictly so-called. Canon Tate and Dean Milman in England, Baron Valckenaer, and others in France, conducted excellent investigations of the poet's whole life and genius,—and, indeed, his life had been treated with injustice as well as his genius. Translations, too, have multiplied, till a certain impatience of them has become manifest. Some are spirited and sympathetic paraphrases, like those of Father Prout and Lord Derby ; some are more severe, but equally able, like those of Professor Conington. Others, again, repeating the error of Francis in new shapes, are loose in style, and modern in character,—echoes of Moore rather than of Horace.

Meanwhile, substantial agreement may be said to have been arrived at on some long-agitated Horatian questions. The old poet's character emerges out of the latest discussions as sound and loveable as ever. A Brutus and Cassius man in his youth, he gave in his intellectual adhesion to the Emperor only when the Empire had become a distinct and beneficent necessity. It was, in fact, his own cause, for the raising of new men, and the encouragement of letters were essential parts of the Cæsarean policy. But he could still sing the praise of “the noble death of Cato.” Nor was there anything servile in his attitude towards Augustus, whose services to the State he celebrated in a manly and independent kind of way. Augustus chid him playfully for not courting him more. Compared with the attitude of Boileau to such a ruler as Louis Quatorze, that of Horace towards Augustus—who, whatever else we may think of him, was one of the ablest sovereigns that ever lived—stands out with something of a classical dignity. With regard to his private life, what writer has shown more filial piety, or shewn it with a finer disregard of all the mean social fears which beset low natures in unexpected prosperity ? What man has ever been more familiar with the rarer and sweeter natures of his time ? As for his morals, he would not have understood what is held on some branches of morals by the modern world, which has no right to measure him by its own standards. And Buttmann did a good deal to put people right on one matter at least, when he subjected the heroines of the love-

songs to a critical inquiry. There are some eighteen of them, but they vanish away when looked at closely. The Pyrrhas and Glyceras are mere Greek statuettes. The Lalage of one lyric is not the Lalage of another ; and Lydia dissolves into two figures, one as shadowy as its sister. Mr. Newman contends for the historical reality of Cinara, and is a little annoyed with Horace for not having married her. But even Cinara proves to have been a mere name on investigation. These houris of literature, with yellow and myrrh-scented hair, and crowns of ivy or rose leaves, were just as much Greek ornaments of Horace's library as the figures which Atticus bought in Athens for the library of his friend Cicero's Tuscan villa. The fact is, that in one whole class of his Odes, our friend the Venusian simply used the Latin language as an ivory on which to paint Greek subjects. This is so indisputable, that he has often been treated within the last half century or so as a mere imitator, whose satires and epistles alone deserve much admiration. But to talk in this way, is to talk just as great nonsense as those gentlemen who pretend to know all about the family of Tyndaris ; or who believe Horace to be in downright earnest when he relates how, having fallen asleep in his childhood on Mount Vultur in Apulia, doves came and covered him with leaves of laurel and myrtle. He imitated the Greek lyrists undoubtedly ; and there is a sense in which Burns imitated the old Scotch song-writers, and Béranger the *chansonniers* of the eighteenth century. Tradition is essential to the popular lyrist, who must also avail himself, in order to seize the popular heart, of known and familiar artistic forms, —just as of known and familiar airs or tunes. But through imitation Horace learned to be original. The charming odes addressed to his friends Septimius, Pompeius Varus, and others, are not fancy-pieces, but fresh from life ; while such noble passages as the description of Regulus in the *Calo tonantem* are thoroughly Roman. Scholars who insist too much on the imitative side of Horace's labours, seem to forget that the Greek lyrists Alceus, Sappho, and others, continued to exist alongside him for many ages, and that, if he had been anything like a mere echo of them, his works would have been allowed to fall into oblivion. As it was, he appears to have been as popular through the whole Roman empire as Béranger in France, or Burns in Great Britain. We cannot say, indeed, how far it was possible for a writer to penetrate the masses in a civilization of which slavery formed so large a feature ; but there is evidence enough that Horace was as widely known as any classical writer could become. Now, it is a cardinal point about our three lyrists, and their own peculiar triumph, that they gained the multitude without losing the cultivated classes. "If anybody provokes me," boasts Horace, "he shall weep for it, and be sung about all through the city." Béranger, whose songs were heard in every *cabaret*, tells us, not without complacency, that Louis XVIII. was accused of having them on his night-table when he died. Who such a formidable enemy of the Bourbons as Béranger ? But the head of the Bourbons was a great lover of Horace, and knew a truly

good song when he saw it. Success of this double kind is by no means the necessary attendant of all kinds of lyrical greatness. Odes like those of Gray or Wordsworth, even songs like some of Mr. Tennyson's, are not addressed to the people. What can be grander in its way, for example, than Tennyson's bugle-song? But take a stanza of it:—

O love, they die, in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill, and field, and river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.

Who can even imagine a stanza like this being sung by a country girl, while spreading her webs to bleach near a running stream?

This illustration of a poet's popularity is taken from Allan Cunningham, who records it as his own experience in the matter of the popularity of the songs of Burns. Burns, like Horace, has been differently estimated at different periods, since his death in 1796, ten years after his poems burst upon the world. His first biographers, including even Dr. Currie, obviously underrated him; and Walker especially (of whom the world would never have heard but for his acquaintance with the great man) writes in an intolerable and contemptible strain of patronage. It was the misfortune of Burns to be born in an age when Scotland had ceased to be a kingdom, without having reconciled herself to the condition of a province. In an earlier time he would have been happier, for whatever his circumstances his heart would have been more at peace. In a later time, he would have emigrated young, risen to fame and fortune, and left, probably, greater contributions to literature than any of those for the sake of which the world cherishes his memory. As it was, he fell upon a generation whose society and literature were both eminently artificial, and wrote his best things in a language the doom of which was already sealed. His whole life was thus a moral struggle, as well as a physical and social one; a struggle between a loyal romantic Scots heart, and a society fallen into narrow divisions, with their class prejudices and local meannesses; between the consciousness of original power, and the check imposed by the over-valuing of mere formal education on the part of an age which had forgotten what poetic originality really was. We hear much of Burns's flattering reception, in the winter of 1786, by the Edinburgh men of letters. But they were after all mere mediocrities; for the era of Hume had passed away, and the era of Scott had not opened. Hume was dead; Adam Smith was in declining health, and suffering from the depression of spirits which overtook him after the loss of his mother. Those whose names one hears as receiving Burns—let us say Blair and Mackenzie, for instance—wanted a relish for real genius, and evidently regarded the poor bard as a miraculous Ayrshire ploughman who thought much too highly of himself. Indeed, gross exaggeration long prevailed on the subject of Burns's actual position and attainments. He was not a peasant at all, to begin with, but came of an old stock of Kincardineshire farmers, who seem to have been people of some superiority, for his grandfather is

found joining his brother agriculturists in setting up a school. His reading, from boyhood upwards, was what would have been thought respectable in almost any class of life at that time ; for, with all the talk about Scotch education, it is the diffusion, rather than the degree of knowledge of any kind, that makes the Northern kingdom remarkable. But though in reality no vulgar portent, Burns was too much treated as such ; and he left Edinburgh with stings lurking in his breast, for which the hospitality that curiosity about him had excited, did not compensate. His drinking-bouts with what he calls “the stately patricians” of Edinburgh, produced not only headaches, but heartaches, which were much worse to bear.

That Burns's poems should have been admired, can hardly be claimed as a credit for that generation. Their power is so glaringly undeniable ; they are so superior to any Scottish poems that the country had seen for centuries ; that to overlook them would have been simple barbarism. Yet they only reached two editions in Burns's life-time, though he lived ten years after achieving his fame. Nor are those apologists more successful who would extenuate the meanness of the sordid patronage which placed him in an employment of seventy pounds a year. Scotland, through the influence of Dundas, had a large share of crown patronage at that time, but it was bestowed on those who had no claims but relationship, or who made up for the want of that, by the qualities so admirably portrayed in Sir Pertinax Macsyophant. Lord Brougham and the late Mr. McCulloch are not unnaturally surprised that Adam Smith should have been fobbed off with a commissionership of customs. But this was a joke to making Burns a guager. And it is no excuse to say that he was “a poet, and as a poet unfit for business.” There are, indeed, some morbid modern poets of peculiar schools who shrink even from criticism ; who are afraid of being looked at ; and who are capable of nothing but producing their highly artificial stuff in a retirement cheered by the occasional company of toadies. But the type of poet we are investigating just now is quite a different kind of man. Whether it be the strong vein of humour which seems an essential part of him, that widens the lyrist of this class, or not, certainly he has always sound common-sense, and tact, and a practical faculty for affairs. Burns astonished people as much by the judgment with which he behaved in a society quite new to him, as by his genius. His talk and correspondence were admirable, and the extant papers of the excise show that he quickly learned, and excellently discharged, all kinds of business that came in his way. The similar qualities of Horace, whose lot was cast among a more generous people, were chiefly displayed in the mixture of taste and discretion with which he filled his place in the high Imperial society. As for Béranger, some of the ablest men in France loved to illustrate his good worldly wisdom by comparing it to that of Franklin.

Burns was undoubtedly the least fortunate man of our group, from every point of view. The best friend that his genius got for him, the Earl of Glengary, who might perhaps have been to the poet something of what Mæcenas was to Horace, or Prince Lucien Bonaparte to Béranger,

was cut off by death. Yet his name will last if only in these beautiful lines :—

The bridegroom may forget the bride,
Was made his wedded wife yestreen ;
The monarch may forget the crown
That on his head an hour has been ;
The mother may forget the child,
That smiles so sweetly on her knee ;
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And a' that thou hast done for me.

For this "Lament" promises to live as long as the *Tyrrhena regum progenies*, on the one hand ; or the *dédicace* of the *Chansons* published in 1838, on the other. There was a strong romantic element—a feudal feeling akin to that of Sir Walter—in the original attitude of Burns towards the ancient Scotch families. It is seen very clearly in his curious Jacobite letter to Lady Winifred Maxwell, the heiress of the Earl of Nithsdale ; in his correspondence with Mrs. Dunlop, who came of the Wallace blood ; in the dedication of his second edition to the Caledonian Hunt ; and in the high-spirited heart-stirring "Address to Edinburgh." We are reminded in the last poem, of the :—

Quid debeas, O Roma, Neronibus,
Testis Metaurum fumen.—

and not a few similar passages, of Horace. But the stern experience of life taught Burns that the time for generous illusions was gone by. The Jacobite became a Jacobin, or something like it. The poet who had addressed Mr. Tytler, the champion of Mary Stuart, in such verses as these—

My fathers that name have revered on a throne,
My fathers have fallen to right it ;
Those fathers would spurn their degenerate son,
That name should be willingly slight it—

lived to sing "A Man's a Man for a' that," and to welcome the French Revolution. If, at one end of his career, he could, like the Roman poet, think kindly of the Etrurian grandes, and of the Claudi, and Lamiae, of his Northern land,—at the other end of it, he handed over his torch to one who cared little indeed for such recollections and associations,—a child of the Revolution destined to perpetuate its glories, and to continue its work. Fate seems to have curiously linked together these lyrists ; and Béranger, who knew neither the language of Rome, nor of Great Britain, lived to be repeatedly entitled "the Horace," and "the Robert Burns," of France, by men well competent to judge of both.

Burns, like Horace, had enjoyed the advantage of being the son of a good and wise father ; and of receiving that sound domestic training which books cannot give, and which the want of books does not necessarily impair. It is curious to compare the Roman poet's grateful record of the excellent old freedman who kept his youth pure from all corruption :—

Servavit ab omni
Non solum facto, verum cypprobrio quoque turpi.—

with the Scotch poet's similar testimony to the equally humble and admirable cotter of Ayrshire ;—

My father was a farmer upon the Carrick border, O,
And carefully he bred me in decency and order, O.

Pierre Jean de Beranger, born in the Rue Montorgueil, in Paris, in August, 1780, was less happily situated in this important respect. His father was a Picard from the neighbourhood of Peronne, a good-natured careless Frenchman, of volatile character, and wandering habits, in whom, or his career, we can trace none of the solid qualities which belonged to his celebrated son. The father of this De Beranger had kept a *cabaret* near Peronne, having been abandoned by *his* fathor, who re-married in England, and whose name and designation were Beranger de Formentel. But in spite of their condition, the father and grandfather of the poet resolutely maintained a claim to belong to the *noblesse*, and bequeathed him (thair only legacy), a genealogy in which they asserted themselves to be descended from the great house of the Counts of Beranger in Provence. The poet was described as *De Beranger* in his *acte de naissance*, and through life adhered to "the particle;" that famous particle, the right to bear which is so fertile a theme for pleasantry among the wits of Paris, and about which Balzac was so persistently tormented. Béranger, we need not say, became as fervent a democrat as his father was a royalist, and made the "*de*" the occasion for a celebrated song :—

Et quoi ! j'apprends que l'on critique,
Le *de* qui précède mon nom.

* * *
Je suis vilain et très-vilain . . .
Je suis vilain,
Vilain, vilain.

He tells us, however, that he could have passed for a noble if he had liked ; though it is no wonder that he never cared for the subject, bred among the people as he was, and making of the ideas of the Revolution a life-long worship. His youthful training was of a vague and various kind. His father, after having been a lawyer's clerk in the provinces, came to Paris, where he fell in love with the lively and attractive daughter of a tailor, in whose house the song-writer was born. The father and mother separated in six months. The father wandered away to Anjou and elsewhere in search of employment, and the mother went to live by herself, while young Pierre Jean continued under the roof of the good old tailor. Sometimes he went to see her, and she would take him to the theatres in the Boulevards, or to little dances in the country ; so that he learned something of the strange drama of human life in Paris even before learning to read. And what a drama life in Paris was during the boyhood of Béranger, who grew up in a Revolution, as Horace had done before ! At nine years of age he saw the taking of the Bastille from the roof of a house in the Faubourg St. Antoine, where he had been sent to school, but where

he got no other lesson, he says, than the lesson of that spectacle.* In the October of the same year, 1789, while walking with one of his aunts, they found themselves surrounded by a crowd of men, and of women of dreadful appearance. They were carrying the bloody heads of the *gardes-du-corps*, massacred at Versailles, on pikes ; and one of these heads passed quite close to the shuddering boy. When thinking of it, adds he long afterwards, I can see it yet ; and he thanked Heaven that he had been away from Paris during the Terror.

He escaped the scenes of that worst period of the Revolution (which, Republican as he was, he always deplored,) by having been sent to an aunt at Péronne. The good poor woman looked at the lad of nine years and a half, whose grandfather could no longer maintain him ; whose father freed himself from him as a burden ; whose very mother gave herself no thought about his fate ; and who had been sent to her by the diligence as a kind of worthless parcel of humanity to be stowed away as she best could. "It is impossible for me to charge myself with him," said she, in her perplexity ; and Béranger never forgot that moment. "Scenes like these," he remarks, "quickly ripen reason in those who are born to a little of it !" But the honest kindly aunt, a moment afterwards, clasped little Pierre Jean, with tears in her eyes, and exclaimed, "*Pauvre abandonné !* I will be to you a mother !" "Never," writes the grateful poet, "never was promise better kept !" She will be remembered in literary history, in her turn, with the *libertinus* of Venusia, and the grave kindly Scots father, who sleeps in Alloway kirkyard. Béranger calls her his real mother ; and describes her as a woman of superior mind, who had made up for a defective education by serious and select reading. He was still unable to read aloud when she received him, though he had already contrived to get through the *Henriade*. She took him in hand, with the aid of a Racine, a *Télémaque*, and Voltaire's dramas ; and an old schoolmaster taught him to write and cipher.

This excellent aunt's position was that of keeper of a small inn ; and, as may be supposed, she could not bestow on her nephew anything like a high education. He remained through life, in his own words, unable to decline *musa*, a muse, or *rosa*, a rose ; and ignorant of every language but that of his own land. We all know the attitude towards the ancient masters which a misfortune of this kind would have caused a narrow-minded mediocrity to assume. Such a man would have gone through life protesting that the Falernian grapes were sour ; would have sneered at classical scholars ; and made hazardous jests about "Greek particles" without any distinct idea of the place occupied by the particles in the structure of the language. But Béranger was a man of genius, and

* *Ma Biographie*,—a posthumous work, and an admirable contribution to auto-biographical literature. The prose of Béranger is scarcely, if at all, less excellent than his verse. In the satires and epistles of Horace we can see the capacity for a prose style, if need be ; while that of Burns (though occasionally turgid) is full of vigour and animation.

an honest man. Circumstances did not enable him to teach himself Latin, as Rousseau had done. But he always deplored his want of such knowledge as a misfortune ; and he has expressed the feeling in remarkable passages of his letters. His ignorance of Latin gave him more pain, he declares, than all that he suffered from the poverty of his youth. "Horace is to me," he writes, "the Unknown God!"* "The happiness I most envy is that of knowing Greek."† But perhaps he exaggerated his disadvantages after all. For he was a great student of the best translations, to begin with ; especially those of Aristophanes, who had a perfect fascination for him. And then there were the best models of his own brilliant and graceful literature, which he studied thoroughly. From a very early period he loved the standard old French models, in spite of his sympathy with the Revolution, and its influence on literature. He had no respect for the extravagance and eccentricities to which the Romantic movement led ; or with the "easy writing" of later times. "If this sort of thing goes on," are his words, "Racine and La Fontaine will soon be in want of translators."—"We shall soon have people writing," observes he elsewhere, "who have not learned to read." He did not belong, he protests, to the creators of what is called *la littérature facile*,—"the mortal foe of that other literature which has been the joy of my life, and was once the pride of France!" In precisely the same spirit, Horace toiled lovingly at the *cremplaria Graca*; and Burns compared, sifted, analysed, the old Scotch ballads and songs, and the poems of Thomson, Collins, Shenstone, and the Queen Anne men.

Béranger remained in Péronne till he had reached the age of fifteen, having passed two years of the time in a printing-office—a part of his experience to which he always looked back with interest. He had also attended, during a small portion of this period, a gratuitous primary school, one of the thousand new schemes which the ferment of revolution had inspired. Meanwhile, the Revolution itself, and its results, were giving him an education of their own, which blended strangely with the charm of the sonorous elegance, or exquisite and delicate playfulness, of the writers of Louis Quatorze. He attended a club where republican songs were sung, and republican speeches made, an influence to which he attributed the birth in him of *le goût de la chanson*. His aunt herself was full of the enthusiasm of the hour, with which the whole moral air of France was hot. The boom of the cannon of the English and Austrian forces besieging Valenciennes reached Péronne at the distance of sixteen leagues across the plains of Picardy, and woke an echo of hatred of the foreigner in young Béranger's sensitive heart. When a salute announced to the town that Toulon had been retaken, he was on the ramparts, and at every gun his heart throbbed with such violence that he was obliged to sit down to recover his breath. If young Burns, some twenty-five years before, had glowed with patriotic passion on reading of Wallace, what must have been the emotions of a French youngster of kindred soul, with the enemy

* *Correspondance de Béranger*, vol. ii. p. 187-212.† *Ib.* vol. iii. 410.

on the frontier? The love of the national flag, and a certain jealousy of the foreigner, lasted with Béranger through the whole of his long life. In spite of all his admiration for Voltaire, both as genius and reformer, he scarcely ever forgave him his zeal for foreigners, and he never forgave him his outrage to the memory of Joan of Arc.

When Béranger returned to Paris, not long before the time of Burns's death at Dumfries, he found his father and mother living together again, and his father engaged in operations on the Bourse, and Royalist intrigues. Béranger's mother, whom, as he relates, he nowise resembled, either physically or morally, died soon afterwards—her life having been shortened by her "*imprudences*"—at the age of thirty-seven. The young Béranger joined his father in his money dealings, and became a clever financier; and he got some near glimpses of the kind of men who were plotting for the return of the Bourbons. But in 1798 the house broke down, and the growing poet—for he had already written much verse—found himself plunged in poverty. This period of his life corresponds to the period which intervened in the life of Horace between the battle of Philippi and the gift from Mæcenas of the Sabine Farm. Among the earliest of Horace's writings were his Archilochian Lambics against upstarts like Vediūs Rufus; Béranger wrote Alexandrines against Barras and his adherents; and rejoiced when Bonaparte overthrew the Directory. Republican as he was, he thought Napoleon—just as Horace thought Augustus at Rome—the only man capable of governing his disordered country. He admired him, besides, for the genius which had covered the French arms with glory; and sympathised with him, as a new man whose career was itself an embodiment of the hopes and ideas of the Revolution. Looking back to those days, long afterwards, he speaks of them as a time "when I was often hungry, but when France was great and glorious!" He was, indeed, poor enough; poorer than Horace had ever been in his worst days, without, like Horace, having enjoyed a high cultivation. He lived in a garret on the sixth story, in the Boulevard Saint Martin, where the new century found him living on bread and cheese and writing poetry, with a wardrobe consisting of three bad shirts, ("*qu'une main amie se fatiguait à raccomoder*,") and everything else to match. "I was so poor!"—he tells a friend of after years. "The humblest party of pleasure forced me to live on *pandæ* which I made myself."* Yet there were such little parties, sometimes; and there were friends, and love, and songs; and, in spite of all its hardships, Béranger seems to have looked back to that phase of his life with much more pleasure than pain. It was the period of the *Grenier* and of *Lisette*, and is represented by some of the most charming of his songs; for the song-writer, more than any other poet, pours out himself, and his life may be traced from point to point in his strains, as the year is marked by the succession of the notes of different birds.

Béranger was cheerful and hopeful; but the view from his little garret-

* *Correspondance*, vol. i, 423.

window, in spite of its occasional adornment by a curtain in the shape of Lisette's shawl, continued to be dark. One day in the beginning of 1804, it occurred to him to send some of his manuscript poems to Lucien Bonaparte, the most lettered man of the Bonaparte family. He selected for the purpose two copies of dithyrambic verses of four or five hundred lines, and enclosed them with a private communication. Two days passed, when a letter arrived, which Béranger opened with a trembling hand. The senator had read the poems, and wished to see the poet! "My eyes filled with tears," are Beranger's words; "and I gave thanks to God, whom I have never forgotten in my moments of prosperity." The reader can fancy the situation. It was that of Horace, when, after the introduction of Varius and Virgil, the Etruscan grandes opened his heart to him; that of Burns, when the letter of good Dr. Blacklock reached him, just as, flying from bailiffs and intolerable misery, he was about to embark at Greenock for the West Indies. Béranger borrowed some better clothes than his own, and hastened to present himself to the brother of the First Consul. Lucien received him with every kindness, and having to leave for Rome soon afterwards, assigned to him *Ms* allowance as a member of the Institute. There were three years of the *traitement* in arrears, which Béranger received at once. The lyrant is a kindly and loyal man. Béranger made over the greatest part of this sum to his father; exactly as Burns advanced two hundred of the five hundred pounds which he got for his second edition to his brother Gilbert. The good effect of having Lucien for a patron did not stop with the income of a thousand francs a year. It indirectly led to Béranger's being employed by the painter Landon in preparing a list of drawings of the pictures and statues in the galleries of the Louvre, then yearly enriched by the plunder of Europe. The poet could now help, not only his father, but his sister, and the widow of the "good old tailor," as he always calls him, his grandaire.

Three years later, and still through the indirect operation of the patronage of Lucien, Béranger obtained a clerkship in the department of Public Instruction. He began to be known, too, among men of letters; and his genius ripened under the influence of his constant reading and observation. The writings of Chateaubriand made a deep impression upon Béranger. He owed it to Chateaubriand, he says, that he was ever anything more than a Voltarian, and that he remained through life a spiritualist rather than a materialist in his philosophy. The spirit of the nineteenth century finding expression through an improved form of the style of the eighteenth,—that is the combination which the songs of Béranger present to us. Though a writer of songs from early youth, Béranger tried several other species of composition before devoting himself entirely to the *genre*. We hear of a poem about Clovis; of a poem about Joan of Arc; of comedies. But he never contrived to satisfy himself in these fields; nor was it till 1818 that his reputation as a song-writer began to spread, and to encourage him to cultivate more than ever his special talent. The *Sénateur*, the *Petit Homme Gris*, the *Gueux*, but above all

the *Roi d'Yvetot*, ran through society in manuscript copies, and delighted the lovers of such things,—always, observes Béranger, a numerous body in France. The *Roi d'Yvetot*,—that delightful little portrait of a kind of French King of Brentford, whose crown was a nightcap ; his guard a dog ; and who journeys round his kingdom on a donkey—was a comic but kindly satire on the Imperial policy, and had a great success :—

Oh ! oh ! oh ! oh ! ah ! ah ! ah ! ah !

Quel bon petit Roi c'était là !

Le, la.

Béranger was elected to the *Caveau*, a club of wits and song-writers, presided over by Désaugiers, who held a place in it corresponding to that held by Charles Collé in the *Caveau* of the previous century. Of all the song-writers of that century which loved song so much, Collé was the gayest and most pungent. There is a neatness and grace,—a smartness, piquancy, and prettiness together,—suggesting a kind of cracker bonbons for the suppers of the gods,—about his *chansons joyeuses*. But, unfortunately, it is almost impossible to quote them ; they are fit only for that private room in the Bourbon Museum at Naples, which zeal for classical learning alone, (no doubt) induces so many travellers to visit, but from which youths under eighteen are rigorously excluded. Collé was private reader to the Duke of Orleans, for the entertainment of whom and his friends he wrote songs, and little theatrical pieces, and he knew the tone of his society. There is *gaillardise* enough in Béranger's songs, especially the early ones. But Béranger,—and this is his great distinction,—elevated the *chanson*, both morally and intellectually. In the hands of Collé, it was an aristocratic toy ; in the hands of Béranger, it became a popular weapon.

The return of the Bourbons gave Béranger an admirable opportunity of employing it in its new character. Although a Bonapartist, he had never been an Imperialist. But when he saw foreign troops in possession of Paris, and a king whose very presence suggested national humiliation, his sense of the despotic character of Napoleon's government gradually grew weaker, and was succeeded by a kind of romantic tenderness for a name and family associated with so much glory and so much misfortune. The violet became in a kind of manner to him, what the white rose once was to Burns ; and his "Charlie" was so far away "over the water,"—all the weary way to an island in another hemisphere ! There were other conditions of the Restoration hateful to Béranger. Grandees of the emigration had come back, cherishing the vain hope that the whole changes of the last thirty years could be reversed, and the old society restored with the old dynasty. The *Marquis de Carabas* was the type of this class of inane fogies in Béranger's satire :—

* * *

Vers son vieux castel

Ce noble mortel

Marche en brandissant

Un sabre innocent.

Chapeau bas ! chapeau bas !

Gloire au Marquis de Carabas !

Nor were the Marquesses of Carabas the only unwelcome visitors in Béranger's eyes. On all hands he heard the re-establishment of religious orders hopefully advocated. The Capuchins were to begin life again ; the Jesuits were busy ; a whole swarm of dusky creatures came to the light,—like disagreeable reptiles, of the slug or beetle kind, after a thunder shower ! In the powerful satire, *Le Bon Dieu*, there is a piquant stanza on such as these :—

Je nourris d'autres nains tout noirs
Dont mon nez craint les encensours.
 Ils font de la vie un carême,
 En mon nom lancent l'anathème
 Dans des sermons fort beaux, ma foi,
 Mais qui sont de l'hebreu pour moi.
 Si je crois rien de ce qu'on y rapporte,
 Je veux, mes enfants, que le diable m' emporte,
 Je veux bien que le diable m' emporte.

In *Les Capucins*, too, there is a lively satirical movement :—

La faim désole nos provinces ;
 Mais la piété l'en bannit ;
 Chaque fête graces à nos princes,
 On peut vivre de pain bénit.

Bénis soient la Vierge et les saints ;
 On rétablit les Capucins !

In these ecclesiastical satires we have the counterparts of those which Burns produced during the Old and New Light controversy in Ayrshire—*The Twa Herds*, for example, and *Holy Willie's Prayer*. But while the Scot had a miserably narrow field of action—dealing, as he did, with the provincial squabbles of an unlettered clergy, and writing in a *patois*—the Frenchman's audience soon became European. The annoyance of the Government, and its prosecutions, cost him the loss of his place in the *bureaux* of the university, and two terms of imprisonment,—one in 1821, in St. Pelagie ; the other in 1828, in La Force. But the sale of his volumes not only more than compensated for his place, but became a source of revenue for life. Success raised Burns to the position of—a gauger ; with the privilege of dining at the houses of lairds who made him drunk, and whose wives sometimes cut him for the breaches of manners which such drunkenness produced. Success made Béranger not only independent in means, but one of the chiefs of the Opposition in France—the associate in politics of Lafayette, Dupont (de l'Eure), Benjamin Constant, Marmel, Thiers ; the friend of Chateaubriand, Victor Hugo, Lamennais, Lamartine. Under Louis Philippe, office was open to him if he had been ambitious. A hint would have secured him a *fautouil* in the Academy. But he kept aloof from such worlds ; lived much in retirement—part of the time at Passy, Fontainebleau, and Tours ; did a thousand acts of kindness and generosity, and lived and died a simple *chansonnier*. In the course of the last Revolution he was elected to a seat in the Assembly, but he resigned it almost immediately. When his

life closed at a great age in 1857, so potent was the magic of his name, that the Imperial Government feared a republican movement at his funeral, and gave him public obsequies itself. The old tailor's grandson went to his grave between troops of soldiers stretching for miles, and with a whole city looking on, from roof to pavement. Shouts of "*Honneur à Béranger!*" rose and fell along the streets as the procession passed. These were, no doubt, what Horace would have called *supervacui honores*; but they are pleasant to think of as signs of the gratitude of a nation.

We have indicated, we think, not a few points of similarity in the fortunes and characters of the Three Lyrists; and such might be remarked even in the persons of at least two of them. Horace and Béranger were both little men; stoutish in middle age; one of them gray, the other bald, before his time; and of simple costume and manners. Of the face of Horace, we only know that his eyes, which were apt to suffer from weakness, were dark. The eyes of Béranger were large and blue; and his arched lips, sensitive and voluptuous, gave peculiar expression to a smile at once kindly and melancholy. The little Frenchman, too, had a large head, leaning towards his right shoulder, which was quaintly compared by one of his friends to "a skull of St. Chrysostom, with a face of Bacchus."* Horace and Béranger were men of town life—men formed by capitals; and the effect of this is seen in their writings. Burns had much of the character, as of the appearance, of the farmer; his manly build, his fresh complexion lighted up by dark eyes of singular lustre and beauty, suggested recollections of the hills and rivers, and the rainy West.

The emphatic distinction of the song-writer is not only that his songs are himself, but that in himself he is a high poetic representative of the common man. There are poets, and some of the greatest, who form a kind of caste, a sacred college, among themselves. One cannot fancy a small Æschylus, a little Milton, a miniature Wordsworth. If an ordinary writer attempted to write like these demigods of literature, he would give pleasure to no human being. In their high walk, you must be a demigod, or nothing. But the kind of charm which belongs to a Horace or a Béranger is simply the highest expression of a keenness of sense and quickness of feeling, which exist in less degree among many inferior men. They are the poets of the common world—not the commonplace world, which is a separate thing—but still the every-day world of their own generation. They express, with the peculiar and incomparable felicity of genius, the prevailing half-conscious thought of their time, and give voice to the universal passions which play through the life of the human race. Hence, each of them is a man relished by his contemporaries, and strongly national; and hence, also, their resemblance to each other, in spite of differences of race, epoch, and language. For the great elementary conditions of human existence are pretty much the same everywhere. All nations and ages worth taking cognizance of in literature have enjoyed the

* *Béranger et Lamennais.* Paris, 1861.

praises of good and the ridicule of bad men ; the celebration of national glory, the beauty of the revolving seasons, or the pleasures of love and wine. The song-writer's soul is not "a star" that "dwells apart." He is a man of the world, with the sympathies and interests of the mass of men, and with his share of their frailties.

In a paper of this kind, where our object is to illustrate the type, rather than to analyse minutely the individual, we naturally dwell on the resemblances by which the existence of the type is proved, and its essential characteristics distinguished. All the leading themes of the song-writer are handled by these three lyrists in a similar spirit. Horace has his vein of natural piety, but he is against superstition. He tells rustic Phidyle that the simplest offering from a pure hand and an open heart is as welcome to the gods as the slaughter of ponderous oxen ; a doctrine quite in accordance with that of the *Cotter's Saturday Night*, and with the inspiration of Béranger's *Dieu des Bonnes grns.* He loves the coolness of wells and theplash of fountains, the shade of the poplar and pine, the sound of music among the Sabine rocks ; as Burns the wimpling of a Scotch stream through a glen or underneath the hazels ; as Béranger the spring notes of birds in the woods and gardens sloping down to the Loire. Each poet, of course, regards such enjoyment from a point of view of his own : the Roman under his hot sky, and musing on a philosophy which preached pleasure, but could not escape a tinge of melancholy, seeks shade and repose, and momentary forgetfulness of the imperial city to which he knows that he intends to return. The Parisian's feeling is nearer to the Roman's than to that of their brother the Scot ; but he colours even external nature with a tint from the politics of his age ; nay, is sometimes unwilling that the birds should sing to any but his favourite idol, the people ! * In the Scot we have a deeper relation to scenery. He is a man of the North, with a vein of the mysticism of the Scandinavian blood ; and he goes to nature for sympathy with his sorrow, as well as for a tender oblivion of it, and throws over the landscape the sentiment, whatever it may be, which has possession of his soul. We have said already that Burns is emphatically the rural lyrist of the three, though equally at home with human character, such as other influences contribute to make it. This appears in the love songs, as in all the rest. The heroines of Horace, whenever they appear to have any reality, are dwellers in the capital ; damsels of the lute and lyre, whose beauty is the natural ornament of feasts, and of rooms laughing with silver. Those of Béranger (a democrat even in his loves !) are *grisettes* ; it is part of their poetry that, however charming the taste of their simple and cheap attire, they shall be of humble belongings and occupation, daughters of the classes whose work is done in towns. We never hear of either batch of them as "coming through the rye," or encountering their lover

* Sainte-Beuve, though a friend and admirer of Béranger, has not hesitated to censure this extravagance. *Causeries du Lundi*, 2nd ed., vol. ii. (1852.)

among "the rigs o' barley," or parting with him by the banks of a country stream. Many of the heroines of all these are imaginary, as we have before observed of the Greek statuettes of Horace. There seems to have been an historical *Lisette*,* though the name is not always consistently used; but Rosette, Margot, Frétillon, Jeanneton, obviously answer to Pyrrha, Myrtale, Lalage, and that ideal sisterhood; and the same may be said of Tibbie Dunbar, Eppie Adair, and other Scotch lasses of homely names, the echoes of which will last long in Ayrshire and Nithsdale, and many a land far enough away from that which holds the singer's grave. Of the drinking songs, we may say, that in all these poets, they exhibit identity of inspiration, with a dissimilarity of details produced by diversity of latitude and climate. Horace calls for the *amphora* of Massican, which has been ripening in the *fumarium* ever since he was born. It is champagne that Beranger summons when he wants to see Margot's eyes sparkle :—

Le verre au main, voyez-la,
Comme à table elle babille !
Quel air et quels yeux elle a
Quand le champagne pétille !

The Northern bard likes wine, too :—

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
And fill it in a silver tassie ;
That I may drink before I go
A service to my bonnie lassie—

he exclaims ; and a still better and more passionate effusion begins :—

Yestreen, I had a pint o' wine.

But it is to malt, rather than to the grape, that we owe Burns's best drinking songs, of which none perhaps are more admirable than "Willie Brewed a Peck o' Maut." Such a stanza as :—

It is the moos, I ken her horn,
That's blinkin' in the lift sae hic ;
She shines sae bright to wyle us hame ;
But by my sooth she'll wait a wee !

is the very essence of poetic and bacchanalian fun.

To attempt anything like a Plutarchian *σύγκρισις* or comparison of these lyrists, with a view to pronouncing on their relative powers and merit, is a difficult and uninviting task. It is easy to decide that they stand nearer on a level with each other than any song-writer outside the trio stands towards either of them. The songs of Moore, however clever, are artificial — mere strings of epigrams for drawing-rooms. Those of Dibdin are some of them vigorous and natural, but on the whole, they have a factitious character, and one seems to see the Admiralty mark on them, — as if they were served out with other stores. Excellent songs are scattered about our literature, singly or in small groups ; but as two or

* See *Correspondance de Béranger*, I, 423 ; and *La Lisette de Béranger*, by Thales Bernard. (1864.) The last title reminds us that we have seen a special dissertation called *Conjectures sur Tyndaris* !

three epigrams do not make an epigrammatist, so two or three songs do not make a song-writer; and the Three are all fertile. There is a certain right of primogeniture in literature, as elsewhere, and to this Horace is entitled. His culture was far higher than that of the other two. He wrote not songs only, but odes, ranking with the higher grade of the lyrical art; as a moralist and satirist, and author of the "Ars Poetica," he has a station of his own among the magnates of letters which demands deference; and he has exercised a great influence over modern Europe. When Thiers said to Béranger, on his death-bed, "Do you know what I call you, Béranger? I call you the Horace of France," the *chansonnier* answered, with admirable readiness and good taste, "But what would the other one say?" He ought not to suffer for his modesty—the honest *chansonnier*, who always seems half ashamed of his great fame; yet it is not unjust to place him below an elder brother. How, then, rank him with the Scot, whose external history his own more resembles, though he was infinitely better appreciated and rewarded by his nation? Here another difficulty comes in—the danger of being warped by national prepossessions; to which one must add the prodigious disadvantage at which every foreigner stands in attempting to grasp all the merit of works like Béranger's, of which he himself says that they are "intimately French." We cannot find that Béranger—who must have read Horace over and over again in translations—owed anything in that kind of way to Burns. He formed himself on his own literature; and we have a right to remember, in measuring him with Burns, that the strong point of that literature was never pure poetry—poetry proper, strictly so called. In what may be defined as the worldly-poetic element—that which we see in our English Popes and Gays, as distinct from the Shakspeares and Shelleys—France is strong. Accordingly, for urban pungency of comic power; for terse, concise, epigrammatic finish of expression, we can desire nothing better than Béranger. His satire dances to his music as charmingly as Puck at one of the balls of the Queen of the Fairies. But this is not all. There is a fine vein of tender sentiment in such songs as "Qu'elle est jolie!" "Les Etoiles qui Filent," "La Bonne Vieille," "Les Souvenirs du Peuple," and "Le Vieux Caporal;" a vein sufficiently proving Béranger to be a poet, as well as a delightful humourist and wit. Burns, however, we cannot but think, reaches a loftier height; and strikes a deeper chord. Béranger is a song-writer in the best sense, but also in the narrowest sense of the word,—as, of course, he well knew himself. He is a song-writer, and nothing more. He has not left behind him a tale like "Tam o' Shanter;" a pastoral picture, or religious idyl, of grave and earnest beauty, like "The Cotter's Saturday Night." Again, there is,—to borrow an image from the cellar,—more body in the humour and tenderness of Burns, than of Béranger. The irony of some of "Holy Willie's Prayer;" the mixture of ludicrous delineation, with scornful mirth, in "The Holy Fair,"—these pass beyond the sprite-like mockery with which the French-

man taunts the Jesuits. Burns's satire has a dash of Hogarthian poetry, too, as in "Death and Dr. Hornbook," which Béranger's satire does not reach. On the other hand, it would be still vainer to seek in the always pleasant, and sometimes sweet and touching songs of Béranger's graver mood, anything so profoundly heart-moving as the songs of Burns on "Highland Mary." We cannot, indeed, read without a thoughtful melancholy, "La Bonne Vieille," already referred to. He opens with a soft music:—

Vous vieillirez ô ma belle maîtresse !
Vous vieillirez, et je ne serai plus.

And the last stanza sustains the feeling:—

Objet cheri, quand mon renom futile
De vos vieux ans charmera les douleurs,
À mon portrait quand votre main débile
Chaque printemps, suspendra quelques fleurs,
Levez les yeux vers ce monde invisible,
Où pour toujours nous nous réunissons ;
Et bonne vieille, au coin d'un feu paisible,
De votre ami répétez les chansons.

But,—

Ye banks and braes and streams around
The castle of Montgomery—

And,—

Thou lingering star with less'ning ray

belong to a different world. Indeed, they are perhaps *too* deeply tender for common singing. They are hymns rather than songs, and would hardly be out of place in churches.

We may remark, in conclusion, that, for the present, the kind of lyrical poetry of which Horace, Burns, and Béranger are the masters, seems to be extinct. We are in a literary winter when there are no singing birds; though, here and there, a "Theban eagle" may be sailing overhead, but communicating no delight to the multitude, out of sight of whom he wings his way through "the azure depths." The multitude have to fall back on the trash of the hour, which does not connect them by any link with the high literature of the world. Béranger and Burns have been in themselves an education for the poor of France and Scotland, —a consolation in their hard struggles,—a joy in their hours of mirth,—a voice for the feelings to which otherwise they could have given no adequate utterance. The want of living poets of such a class is a kind of national misfortune; but the best remedy for the want is the diffusion of the books which have been handed down to us from more opulent times.



Some Chapters on Talk.

XI.—OF PROMOTING TALK.

"LET us get George Barker," said a lady who was arranging the preliminaries of a certain dinner-party within earshot of the writer of these chapters. "He will make a noise."

That a man should be able to establish a claim upon the hospitality of his friends by the possession of a capacity for "making a noise," seems at first sight rather startling; but it will cease to appear so after a little reflection. Noise is favourable to the development of talk; it gives people courage. Many is the sentence, of a facetious, or perhaps still more of a sentimental nature, which has been checked and nipped in the bud, because, at the very moment when the intending speaker has been about to give it utterance, he has found himself deserted, so to speak, by that running accompaniment of other people's voices on which he had counted. Most readers must have observed this phenomenon among the thousand and one vagaries of talk, that it will sometimes cease in one moment and without the slightest warning, a very tempest of voices dropping suddenly, and a dead silence supervening; and this sometimes at the very moment when some unhappy person is in the act of delivering himself of a phrase or sentiment which is not in the least calculated for publicity. As an instance of this, the writer may mention that he was once present when a sudden pause of this kind took place without warning, just when a certain young man was in the act of informing the lady who was seated beside him, that the expression of her countenance indicated a strong musical capacity,—"And yet there is music in your face," he was saying just at the moment when the accompaniment of voices ceased. The words were uttered by the young gentleman in a loud key, in order that they might be audible to his partner above the general din, and were consequently heard by everybody present, to the extreme confusion of the speaker and of the lady to whom the sentence was addressed.

Now had George Barker been present on this particular occasion, such a misadventure as this just described must certainly have been avoided. The running accompaniment provided by him never leaves off. That this man is a bore of the most direful kind, under ordinary circumstances, there can be no doubt. To be thrown in his way for any length of time—to stay with him in a country-house for instance—is, as will be shown hereafter, a positive affliction. It is at the dinner-table, and there alone, that he is valuable,—valuable, that is, to the giver of the feast. To those who only sit at the feast, and especially to those who sit near him, he perhaps appears

occasionally in the light of a nuisance. That, however, is their affair. Your business as host is to keep the talk going, and you employ this able assistant—just as you do the nimble waiters, who help in another way—to aid you in carrying out your intention. At any cost pauses must be avoided during the progress of your meal, and you know by experience that the presence of this individual is unfavourable to the development of those “flashes of silence,” of which dinner-givers who know their business stand in such wholesome dread.

Of course, in this business of “promoting talk,” the principal responsibility must devolve upon you, who are the giver of the entertainment to which those among whom the talk is to be promoted, are bidden. You have an arduous task to perform, and unless you perform it conscientiously, everything will go wrong. You should, by rights, bear in mind, during the whole of the day of your dinner-party, the remembrance of the work which has to be done. You should breakfast with an eye to it, read the newspaper with an eye to it, lunch—heartily—with an eye to it, and swallow a cup of strongish tea in the course of the afternoon, still with this remembrance of what you have got to do kept carefully before you. What you have got to do is this: to begin with, you have got to talk yourself: “Who rules o'er freemen should himself be free.” He who presides over talkers must himself talk. How you are to do that, how prepare yourself beforehand, how proceed when the moment for action comes, I have attempted to show, in certain succeeding chapters; all that it is necessary to urge now is that the time has come for putting every precept that you have ever mastered into practice. You must talk or nobody else will, and you must begin at once. At the moment when you present your arm to the lady whom you are to take down to dinner, you must have something ready in the way of a remark, for if you go down the stairs in silence, you are lost. There are a hundred slight things which you may say at this time, such as, “It seems to me that the old-fashioned practice of offering a lady your hand to lead her down to dinner was much more courteous and graceful than our modern way of proceeding:” or you may say, “I think I saw you in the Park to-day when I passed through at about six o'clock.” Some trifle of this sort,—it would be intolerably wasteful to use anything of more value at such a time,—will do perfectly. Something must be said at starting, that is the essential. After that you will go on as well as you can. And, besides talking yourself, it must be your constant endeavour to “draw out” to the very utmost the persons by whom you find yourself surrounded. If you see one of your guests sitting silent, either from natural diffidence, or because he has fallen among strangers, or owing to any other cause, it is your duty to look after him immediately, addressing your conversation to him, or in some other way giving him a chance of emerging from his present state of eclipse. A man owes something of attention, and of protection, to every person whom he asks to his table, and it devolves on him unquestionably, if he sees one of his guests unlawfully put upon, or ill-used by a fellow-guest, or reduced to silence by

another's loudness, and disabled thereby from doing himself any sort of conversational justice, to interpose and come to the rescue without delay. There is no doubt that much may be done in this and in other ways by a dexterous host towards making the party at which he presides a successful one. Sydney Smith—by all accounts a great master in our art—seems to have excelled in this way. “There is one talent,” he says himself, “I think I have to a remarkable degree; there are substances in nature called amalgams, whose property is to combine incongruous materials; now I am a moral amalgam, and have a peculiar talent for mixing up human materials in society, however repellent their natures.” “And certainly,” adds his biographer, “I have seen a party, composed of materials as ill-assorted as the individuals of the happy family in Trafalgar Square, drawn out and attracted together by the charm of his manner, till at last you would have believed they had been born for each other.” And these functions, which devolve upon the giver of an entertainment, need to be performed with the utmost tact and delicacy. It is very easy to make some fatal mistake in a matter of this kind. If when you see, as described above, a diffident man sitting speechless at table, you make a sudden assault, even of the most friendly kind, upon him, rallying him upon his silence, or urging him to relate some experience which he has recently passed through, or to tell some story for which he is celebrated—if you deal thus riotously with him, I say, it is ten to one that you will simply frighten him out of his wits, and make him more reserved than he was before. Neither is it always a successful proceeding to do, as some fervent but mistaken promoters do—attempt to interest two stranger guests in each other’s proceedings by means of a sort of disguised introduction. “Mr. Giles has just been travelling in your part of the country, Mrs. Tollemache,” says Amphitryon, bending across; and then he adds,—“Mrs. Tollemache is a Cornish lady, Giles.” It is very seldom that such a speech as this leads to any good: the dialogue which ensues between Mr. Giles and his neighbour under these circumstances being generally forced and spasmodic, and quickly coming to an end. Sometimes the attempt to render Mr. Giles interesting is of another kind. “Mr. Giles,” —it is the hostess who speaks this time—“Mr. Giles has just been staying with Victor Hugo in Jersey, and we are all dying to hear about it.” It is astonishing to see how swiftly and how completely the person thus addressed will shut up and retire within himself under the influence of such an attack. You have as much chance of drawing out a man of this sort, by such a course of proceeding, as you would of catching a horse, in a field, by throwing a sieve-full of corn in his face. Mr. Giles is not to be seduced into describing the particulars of his stay with the great man by such shallow artifices as these.

The fact is that promoting talk, like talking itself, is an art requiring to be practised with delicacy and refinement; and your efforts, as the giver of an entertainment, to draw out your guests, must, above and beyond all things, be always most carefully disguised. There must be the

art to conceal the art, or no good will be done. What you would do in this way effectually you must do indirectly and covertly. If you want Mr. Giles to discourse with his neighbour on Cornish subjects, or to describe his visit to Victor Hugo, you will do well to address some other person at table upon one of these subjects, and not your friend himself. "Sad mining accident that, Rackstraw," you will say, "reported in to-day's paper; and all owing, as it seems, to the extraordinary carelessness of the men." "It is inconceivable," replies Mr. Rackstraw, "the indifference to danger which results from familiarity with it." "Inconceivable," you repeat. "Why, I am told that, at this very moment, there is a mine in Cornwall" (loud) "where, in one of the galleries, there is a hole communicating with the sea, and it is simply stopped with a bung. I have it on the authority of an eyewitness. Fancy keeping out the Atlantic with a cork. Yes, I forgot the exact name of the place, but it's somewhere in Cornwall" (loud) "I know." Now this is the way to bring your friend and his neighbour together on Cornwall. Once let the difficult Giles find the subject brought before him in this sort of way, and he will infallibly join in the conversation; will then, as infallibly, *find out for himself* that the lady next him is well up in Cornish life, and all will go naturally and well. The only thing which you have to avoid is the addressing him openly upon the subject on which you desire that his eloquence shall be exercised.

And now, if the reader will allow it, there should be a few words said concerning certain smaller ways of promoting talk, which, though apparently not of much consequence in themselves, are yet decidedly calculated to forward our great object. Champagne promotes talk, acting in a moment, almost like a charm, insomuch that the observer will frequently note that in a company, previously disposed to silence, that buzz which is so dear to entertainers will begin to be heard in but a few minutes after this friendly liquor has begun to circulate. It develops ideas and gives courage—both valuable qualities for would-be talkers. Its effect is only temporary, it is true, but a temporary outburst is something, and besides, the dose can be repeated. Are there not more bottles beneath the sideboard? Eccentric objects about the table, again, are valuable as promoters. I once knew a fan which did great service in this way. The figures which were painted upon it were intended to tell a story, but what the story was nobody could exactly make out. Everybody had a different view of it and a new explanation. Each new suggestion gave rise to an argument, in the course of which many brilliant things were sure to be said, first on one side and then on another. "The lover has deserted her, she is crying bitterly, and the mother is expostulating," says one. "Mother!" cries another. "There is no mother in the case. They are both mere girls, and this young rascal in the pigtail has forsaken one of them, and has taken up with her rival, who, by the way, seems very glad to get him." From a quarter of an hour to twenty minutes would sometimes be got through by means of discussions of this

sort in connection with this particular fan, and will any one say that the owner of such an instrument as this is not a benefactor to society?

And there are other engines for squeezing talk out of a company of dry and sterile guests beside ladies' fans. I have known a pair of ingenious, but ineffectacious, nut-crackers, made by the village carpenter, to promote talk among persons staying together in the country, and who had travelled over each other's minds to a considerable extent. I have seen great things done by means of a set of Apostle spoons, or a collection of dessert-plates, each one with a different design on its surface. Much may be accomplished with the aid of such inanimate accessories. Not many days since it was my fortune to make one at a table where the conversation, which had been doing very well, but was just beginning to flag, was entirely renovated by some newly imported French crackers, which we pulled at dessert, and in the inside of each of which was a pattern of some article of dress, with trimmings and all other appurtenances complete. Little models of bonnets, aprons, neck-collars, and the like articles of millinery were among these, all made in coloured tissue-papers, and packed up tightly within the ornamental cracker-paper. As each of these minute garments was exhibited in turn, there were, of course, roars of laughter, and this, and the remarkable subsequent effect of the device upon the conversational powers of all present, were so striking that I was unable to resist the conviction that these crackers must decidedly be considered in the light of promoters, and should be mentioned in this chapter accordingly.

It is a hopeful circumstance, and one which shows that general attention is more closely directed to the promoting of talk than one would suppose, that suggestions are made from time to time to the writer of these chapters from persons who are evidently much interested in our present studies. As an instance of this I may mention that only a few days since it was hinted to me by a very efficient talk-student, and in connection with this particular section of my subject, that it would be well if it were the custom on occasions of ceremony to place by the plate of each guest a sort of programme of the kind of conversation with which he or she should entertain his or her neighbour. "Captain Jones is a great traveller. He has crossed the American continent from Canada to British Columbia;" or "Professor Bumps is strong on moral philosophy and ethnology; if you get him on either of these subjects, you cannot fail to extract much useful information." Or the statement might be of a different kind, and might relate to a lady, instead of a gentleman:—"Mrs. Dashwood Smith drives the handsomest pair of ponies in London. She is much interested in horses, she hunts, and will not be sorry to hear the latest intelligence from the Corner." Or yet another type might be described:—"Miss Strong has written a work on the fitness of woman to exercise the elective franchise. She can tell you how many loaves of bread an acre of wheat represents. She knows exactly what it is that the Fenians want, and can see her way to a satisfactory solution of the Roman

question. She knows nothing of balls, operas, plays, flower-shows, and such like trifles, and is not at all desirous of obtaining information upon matters of that frivolous kind." And such an arrangement as this might serve, besides promoting talk, to render our social intercourse more secure, and keep us from getting into many of those small scrapes into which we sometimes fall from not being acquainted with the nationality, the religion, or the family connections of some stranger into whose company we are thrown suddenly. What an advantage it would be, for instance, to find in the sealed envelope beside your plate such information as this concerning the person sitting next you :—" Mr. A. is a Roman Catholic, and strong on the wrongs of Ireland ; " or, " Mr. B. is a member of the Jewish religion. He is related to the C.'s and the D.'s, and, by marriage, to the E.'s. He has written several books, and among them the much-abused work, *Drapason Stopford ; or, The Genius of Music.*

XII.—HOW TO TALK.

We must by no means lose sight of the object which we set before ourselves when we commenced these studies. What was then proposed was, to find out, if possible, some principle or system, by acting upon which such of us as are conscious of our own conversational deficiencies might learn, as far as possible, to supply them. With this end in view we have examined briefly, but, it is to be hoped, at sufficient length for our present purpose, the practice of those persons who are generally regarded as successful talkers, and have also bestowed such an amount of attention as was necessary upon those less gifted individuals with whom silence is to a great extent habitual. It is my firm belief that the subject which we have under discussion is an extremely important one, and deserving of much and grave consideration. And let no one say that this is speaking in an exaggerated tone. Everything in this world is comparative. When, for instance, it is said of young Captain Billings and the Honourable Amelia Coosey, who are just going to start together on the matrimonial journey, that they will be terribly poor, though it is certain that their means will provide them with food, and shelter, and clothes to keep them warm, yet is that phrase, "terribly poor," when applied to this young couple, not really an exaggerated form of words. What is meant is simply that they will be terribly poor considering their position, as, on an income of four hundred a year, they undoubtedly will be. It is exactly in the same way that we may speak of this subject which we have at present under consideration as being of "great importance." If we were in a state of nature, a set of savage settlers upon the shore of some uninhabited land, there is no doubt that the possession of any greater amount of conversational capacity than that which would enable us to express our wants to each other would not be of great importance ; but as we are nothing of the kind, but, on the contrary, inhabitants of a country in a high state of

civilization, the situation is different ; and the necessity under which we find ourselves of being able to make fluent talk on all sorts of occasions is pressing enough to justify us in speaking of the art of making such talk, as an art which it is of great importance that we should cultivate and bring to perfection.

It is surely impossible for any one giving this subject of ours due consideration to fail of having a high respect and admiration for the character of a good talker. Really to excel in this way, a man needs to be possessed of so many fine and valuable qualities. He must be well endowed with natural gifts : he must be morally courageous ; he must have a retentive and accurate memory, some amount of imagination, or at least of fancy, and an active intellect. Nor must he be behindhand in acquired qualities. He must be well educated. How many things ought he to know ; on how many subjects is it necessary that he should possess at least a fair average amount of information ? Those are the classics to begin with. A man who is to be ready to talk at all times, and in all societies, must certainly have attained to some amount of classical knowledge. When the precise meaning of a certain well-known passage in one of Horace's odes, or one of the satirical pieces of Catullus, is being discussed among a party of men, it is necessary that anybody who has pretensions to be called a talker should be able to put in his word, and give some indication that he knows the passage under discussion, and is at least acquainted with the meaning ordinarily assigned to it. Then, in history, and universal biography, he must be thoroughly well up ; and this, not only as to their highways, but pre-eminently also as to their byways. He must know, for instance, not only what were the battles engaged in by a great general such as Marlborough, but also on what terms that hero lived with his illustrious consort, and how Duchess Sarah sometimes plagued him sorely ; or, if Jonathan Swift's name should come upon the carpet, it is necessary that the talker who is to be described as "good," should have something to say, not only about the dean's influence upon the literature of his time and country, but as to his treatment of his female admirers, Stella, Varina, and Vanessa. For it is a curious thing, but true nevertheless, that numerous as are the subjects of interest connected with our own day which we have got to talk about, it yet sometimes, and in some societies, happens that the conversation will go back to such "old-world" stories as these, and that even the authorship of Junius will get to be discussed across a modern dinner-table. Nor is an acquaintance with matters of this sort by any means all that is necessary. A good talker must be very well up in art-knowledge, using the term in its widest sense. He must know the outlines of the history and chronology of painting, must be able to say something about the influence of Perugino upon his pupil Raphael, something of the relative merits of Claude Lorraine and Turner. And of music, again, he must not—especially in these days—be even moderately ignorant. You will find this subject discussed, and elaborately discussed, too, now-a-days, in most societies.

We have all of us assisted on many occasions when the talk has been of Mozart and Bach, or Gounod and Wagner, the music of the past, or the music of the future, and when we have had to walk warily, and think twice before enunciating an opinion, lest we should incur the contempt of the knowing ones. Has it not frequently happened to the reader to find himself one of a company in which a subject of this sort has been started? The great Cymballini, or some other equally eminent composer, is known to have written a new opera, which has never been performed in this country, but about which public curiosity is much excited; and this piece of work becomes a subject of discussion. From various parts of the table, contributions to the fund of information which is at the disposal of the company are poured in. "I saw a man yesterday," says a distinguished amateur, "who was with Cymballini the other day, in Paris, and to whom the composer played certain passages from the new opera. My friend says that it is divine, and contains some of Cymballini's very best work." This brings out, of course, an expression of opinion from another amateur, in direct contradiction to this view of the matter. This last has heard that the thing is "very poor throughout, and is, above all, a mass of plagiarisms." Then a gentleman well up in the history of music takes the opportunity of putting in his contribution. "There was," he remarks, in a good loud voice, "an opera written on the same subject—as you, Mrs. Jingle, will doubtless remember—by Bellini; but I think it has seldom, if ever, been performed in this country." The lady referred to replies that "she heard it once at Milan." Is there not, by the way, always somebody present, in all societies, who has assisted at a performance of an opera which no one else has heard, and always at Milan? "She heard it once at Milan," she says: "thought the music poor; but then it was so divinely sung,—Persiani, then in her best time, taking the principal part." Such talk as this is very common. It is *so* common, indeed, that any man who frequents society will find it very well worth his while to "get up" music, as a subject, sufficiently to be able to join in such discussions. It is compromising to the reputation of a professed talker to allow even one single subject of importance to be discussed by a company of which he forms one without his contributing something to the talk.

A conversation of the sort here described will sometimes, out of deference to some foreigner who happens to be present, be carried on in the French language; and the mention of this circumstance brings us to the consideration of another important qualification which a good talker should certainly possess. He should be a linguist. He should have a tolerable knowledge of the German and Italian languages, and should be a glib French scholar as well. How, otherwise, will he feel on an occasion when, for the reason just given, the French idiom is employed by the company as the medium of inter-communication? How will he feel when the good story is told, the point of which—if not the whole story—is given in Italian? He will make desperate efforts to

appear to understand. He will watch those more fortunate persons present who do understand, in order to take his cue from them. When he sees them laugh he will laugh too, but in a shabby and underhand way which takes nobody in. It is a grave question whether it is ever possible to take any one in in this way ; whether any man can make others believe that he is enjoying a joke when he does not see it, or that he understands a story when he has not the least idea what it is about. The writer of these words has seen this thing tried frequently, and has even himself attempted it on more than one occasion, but has never known such unworthy strivings to be attended with any measure of success. Few of us are unacquainted with that story in which the Italian guide plays such an important part, and the whole point of which turns upon that individual's facetious reply to a remark of his patron's : " 'Corpo di Bacco !' the fellow exclaimed," says the story-teller, and then the fun follows.

The number of subjects on which a talker must be well informed, if he hopes to rise to any distinction in his profession, is undoubtedly very great. Nothing has as yet been said about politics ; yet in these it is necessary that he should be thoroughly well up, or what becomes of him in certain circles when the ladies leave the dining-room, and the inevitable pompous talk begins ? And the discussion of political topics, and, indeed, of others which come under the general denomination of news of the day, is in these days a much more difficult thing than it used to be in the good old period, when a man might talk *Times*, and yet get listened to and believed in. People will not have *The Times* at second-hand now ; and a statement prefaced with the established old formula, " I see by the evening paper," stands little chance of being favourably received. To get listened to in the present day, you must have something to say which you have got from some private source. Your "political intelligence" must have reached you from somebody so high in office that you only mention him as "the person who knows more of the intentions of the Government than any other man in England." Your Royal Family anecdote must have come from Gold Hearth-broom, or Silver Tong, or some other officer in equally high position about the Court. If you have some startling information to give about the Suez Canal, or the Mont Cenis Tunnel, it must be through Piston, C.E., that you received it ; while, if you have anything to say about the Abyssinian expedition, it must be something which you heard at the War Office "this very afternoon."

And besides all this knowledge of politics and history, both ancient and modern, of living languages and dead classics, of art and science, a man, to be a thoroughly useful and reliable talker, should know at least a little about a great many other, and perhaps smaller, matters, which he may, under certain circumstances, be called upon to deal with conversationally. We have been chiefly occupied with what it behoves a man to know in order that he may acquit himself creditably as what may be called a metropolitan talker ; but this is not enough. He must be a

proficient in country talk, as well as town talk. He must be able to treat of horses and dogs, of game and partridges, and to discuss the relative merits of breech-loaders and muzzle-loaders ; and when the inevitable after-dinner stories of the eccentric neighbouring squire, and what he said to the Duke of B. when that nobleman shot the squire's favourite pointer, or what, on the other hand, the Duke said when he was put in a corner of the plantation which did not suit him—when stories of this type begin to circulate, then must our talker also be ready with *his* anecdote of an appropriate kind. He should have, moreover, a good knowledge of Swedes, and at least a smattering upon the subject of mangold-wurzel ; should know the price of land, by the acre, in the different counties of England ; and the relative value of labour in Dorsetshire and Northumberland.

I am giving but a mere outline of what it is requisite for a man to know who intends to be a talker. To give a complete list of all the branches of knowledge in which he ought to be well and thoroughly grounded would occupy an amount of space in these pages which I should not have the courage to ask for. Truly it is an arduous career to enter on, this of a talker. How many things a man must do, how many places he must go to, how much he must undergo, in order to talk well ! Are we not all—even such of us as have not the ambition of reaching any very high distinction in this way—are we not all influenced, in many of our proceedings, by this desire to have something to talk about ? Do we not often act contrary to our strongest inclinations with this object ? There are books which everybody is reading, and which, though they fail to interest us, we read also, in order that we may be able to join in the conversation, when the books in question are under discussion. There are plays which we don't want to see, operas which we don't want to hear, parties which we don't want to go to, exhibitions of various kinds which we don't want to attend, concerts which weary us, and lectures which bore us—at all of which we assist in order that, when the inevitable question, "Have you seen such a picture ?" or, "Have you heard such an opera ?" is put to us, we may be able to launch forth into criticism on the picture or opera in question, and give an opinion on the relative merits of each. I have no doubt as to the large influence of this motive on a considerable section of man and woman kind. Do we not often see at a concert—when the fierce amateur with spectacles is following every note of some favourite composition in the music-book, and drinking it in with joy—do we not see many persons present, whose wandering looks and impatient gestures, prove that this musical treat is hardly a treat to them, and whose every glance and every action give one the impression that, upon the whole, they would prefer, at that moment, being anywhere else in this habitable world than at the Hanover Square Rooms ? And again, when some ponderous volume, treating perhaps of some equally ponderous subject, is being "much talked about," do we not often see an unfortunate victim spending hour after hour of the day in company with this big book,

in order that he or she may have something to say concerning it : carrying it about from place to place, trying it now on the sofa in the drawing-room, now in the leather chair in the library, and again under the trees in the garden, but always ready to lay it down on the smallest provocation —a child entering the room with a demand for pencil and paper, or a robin darting about among the cedars on the lawn ?

Every science has its martyrs, and such persons as those above alluded to are the martyrs to this one of ours. Martyrs they are unquestionably, since they endure tortures for the sake of their cause. We have already taken note of the sonata penalty, and observed how acute is the distress which it inflicts upon some persons born with certain deficiencies of ear and taste. Yet this, or the evening-party infliction,—sometimes a very severe torment indeed, the victim being exposed to a most extreme and insupportable degree of heat, and at the same time subjected to a very acute and painful amount of pressure, resembling the *peine forte et dure* of former times,—these sufferings, and many more which it is not necessary to enlarge upon here, the faithful will sustain cheerfully, with the sole object before them of accumulating matter on which it will be possible for them to exercise their talking powers when the proper time comes.

XIII.—THE SAME.

In most of those Manuals of Instruction, Guides, and Hand-books, which are published from time to time with the ostensible object of teaching men and women how to practise some art or handicraft in which they desire to excel, the student is bidden to watch carefully the proceedings of some eminent professor of the said art or handicraft, and to imitate the same as closely as may be. This counsel is indeed common to all such books, whether the art whose principles they teach be that of throwing a fly, or handling a cue, or painting a landscape from nature. " You will learn more," say the compilers of these treatises, " by observing the proceedings of an able and practised performer for half an hour, than by theorizing for a week on end." Truths arrived at by universal consent are much to be respected. Who is the writer of these chapters that he should set himself up against other compilers of hand-books ? He does not attempt to do so. Let him, then, also recommend this practice which is held in such high esteem by teachers of all kinds, to the diligent talk-student, and beg him, when he meets with a great talker, to observe him with a watchful and discriminating eye, noting his manners and customs, with the view of arriving at the principles of action on which they are based. The manners, by the way, of a great talker are not always of the politest. He is commonly overbearing, and not unfrequently even rude. He is apt to interrupt and cut short other conversationalists ; and declines, for the most part, to hear what they have got to say. Leaving, then, the manners of the great talker out of the question, and getting on to his

customs, which will be more profitable as a matter of study, we shall find :—

1. That it is his custom to guard very carefully against waste.

Any man who aspires to be a good talker must be, above all things, careful and discreet in this particular. He must never, as we have seen in a previous chapter, spoil a promising subject by introducing it at a time when it will not get listened to, or waste a good thing upon a person who is unworthy to receive it. He must not, for instance, throw away a new story, or, indeed, any statement or piece of description which happens to be new, upon some unimportant member of the company in which he finds himself—some poor relation or obscure guest. For such persons any ancient wares which the talker happens to have by him—soiled articles or damaged goods of last season—will do perfectly well, and it would be folly and waste to set before them the novelties which are wanted for their betters. To produce a conversational tit-bit, again, of a really relishable quality, at a wrong moment, would be an unpardonable act of extravagance and wastefulness. No man in his senses, for instance, would think of saying a good thing, or entering upon a promising narration, in the drawing-room before dinner. A talker who knows what he is about will remember how much more valuable the tit-bit in question will be later in the evening, and will, with that self-control which must always characterize him, check himself in time. He must have a care, though, that the anecdote, statement, or whatever else it may be, which he thus defers publishing, does not escape his memory altogether. Examples of this sort of forgetfulness might easily be quoted. They are by no means uncommon.

Continuing our observation of the customs of a professed talker, we shall observe :—

2. That he commonly speaks in a loud tone of voice, and rarely or never addresses the person who happens to sit next him.

This particular characteristic of the "subject of our remarks" is a very special one indeed. Truth to say, it seems on reflection as if this power of talking across a table was the distinguishing mark of the real talker. The man who merely earwigs his partner can hardly be said to deserve this proud title. He only keeps up a muttered conversation with the person next him—a comparatively easy achievement, of small value from a social point of view. He is just better than the confirmed taciturn, who remains utterly speechless, and that is all. It would be sacrilege to mention him in the same breath with the great creature who, addressing some individual seated at a distance of at least fifteen feet in a diagonal line, says, "By-the-by, Silvertongue, there was rather a curious thing happened after you went out of court to-day;" or, "Did you hear, Mrs. Jones, of the extraordinary behaviour of your little *protégé* at the concert at Dudley House?"

Speech of this sort, delivered in a key sufficiently loud to be audible above the clatter, which accompanies the serving of dinner even in the

best regulated households, marks the truly great master whose performances are really worth studying. Of course, the beginner cannot expect to be able at once to emulate the achievements of this professor, and to execute this difficult diagonal business at a first trial. Still, he should always bear in mind that this is what he has got to aim at—that this is what he must come to at last—and that he can never hope to be looked upon in the light of a successful talker, till he is able to hold his own in a conversation in which all sorts of distant, as well as near, contributors take part.

Proceeding methodically with our observations, we find:—

3. That the habitual and practised talker does not skip rapidly from subject to subject, but exhausts each one thoroughly before he goes to another.

Of all the precepts which the conversational *aspirant* should "grapple to his soul with hooks of steel," this one, that he must not abandon a subject once started till it is utterly and entirely used up, is, I think, the most important. It lies at the root of all success in talking. By adhering to this principle, a man of very moderate natural gifts will go further, in the long run, than a much more richly endowed personage who is not in the habit of abiding by this golden rule. An inefficient and incapable talker is always discursive, and darts from one subject to another, as if the supply at his disposal was unlimited. He deals with his subjects, indeed, as an indiscreet concocter of lemonade does—with the lemons with which he operates, giving one after another a hasty squeeze and then throwing them away, instead of completely exhausting each lemon with fierce hand-pressure, and then putting it into a lemon-squeezing machine to extract the uttermost drops. The discreet talker acts thus with his conversational lemons. Drop by drop he causes the garrulous juice to exude, and then, as it becomes necessary, subjects each of them to such an extreme high pressure as will bring out any remaining virtue which may still be capable of elimination. The importance of proceeding upon this principle cannot possibly be overrated. The exhaustive system is the only one on which the slightest reliance can be placed, as those who try to act upon any other will find to their cost.

Let us try to make this matter more clear by an example. Suppose that you, a diligent cultivator of the art of talking, go out to dinner on St. Swithin's day, which, as the festival occurs in the middle of the London season, is a likely enough thing to happen: of course you will ask your next neighbour if she believes in the popular superstition connected with the day, and equally of course, in these enlightened days, she will reply that she does not. Now here comes an opportunity for the exercise of that conversational perseverance of which such favourable mention has just been made. The imperfectly instructed talker would very likely abandon St. Swithin at this point, and go off to something else—the opera, the horticultural fête, or what not. But you who are better taught will not act in this improvident fashion. You will, to begin with, cleave

with desperate tenacity to the rudimentary parts of your subject. You will adhere, as long as the thing is possible, to the saint himself; you will speculate as to who St. Swithin was, or how the superstition belonging to the day can have originated. You will remark that most likely there was some amount of practical foundation for it,—that persons who were in the habit of watching the weather had observed that it very often rained about the middle of July, and that, when it did rain at that time, there was ordinarily a long continuance of bad weather. Some practical consideration of this sort, you will say, was generally to be found at the root of most of these queer fancies. The origin of the superstition thus disposed of, you will naturally turn from St. Swithin's days in general to this present St. Swithin's day in particular, and initiate a discussion on the weather. Had it rained in the course of the day? Surely not. "Yes," replies your neighbour, "there were a few drops in the morning." You express surprise. You had not observed anything of the kind. You suppose then that "we are in for it, for forty days. Six weeks' rain, what will people do?" It might be imagined now by uninitiated persons that here was an end of the business; but it is not so. St. Swithin is, after all, only a part of your subject, which is in reality superstition in the abstract. So when the saint himself is squeezed dry—no pun is intended—you can go off to other superstitions, and discuss them, one by one, at your leisure. You can ask your companion whether she really believes that Friday is an unlucky day, and whether she objects to being one of thirteen at table. More speculations follow concerning these superstitions, which with careful management prove to be as suggestive as St. Swithin himself, so that this one subject and its natural ramifications will serve to keep you afloat from the time of sitting down to soup, till the moment when the game, or rather, as there is no game in season on St. Swithin's day, till the inevitable ducks and green peas begin to circulate.

Or suppose that our model talker is in his place at the dinner-table on the occasion of another important anniversary, occurring at a time of year far removed from the period of the St. Swithin festival,—suppose that he is dining out on Guy Fawkes day, what use will he make then of his opportunities? He will begin, probably, with a piece of description. He has had occasion to go into the City that morning, and in one of the by-streets through which his road lay, he came suddenly upon a great stuffed figure with a black face and hideous goggle-eyes, and in all respects very unlike the usual guy. The name of "Theodore" was written on a banner carried in front of this monster. "Curious, wasn't it?" says our adept; and then he goes on to give his opinion that the time is coming when this anniversary will be habitually taken advantage of by the public as an opportunity of gibbeting any particular individual who happens to be unpopular at the moment, and when the original legend belonging to the day will be entirely lost sight of. After this, he will of course proceed to remark how wonderful it is that the story has been remembered so long as it has, and to speculate on the reasons which have kept its memory

alive. The name, he thinks, has something to do with it,—much, in fact: it is short, easily remembered, pronounced without difficulty. If it had been a Gualterio della Mirandola, or a Hildebrand von Klingenspohr, who had placed those barrels of gunpowder under the Parliament Houses, he would, in either case, have been forgotten long ago. Guy Fawkes, on the other hand, seems a name specially adapted to the British larynx, just as the figure ordinarily associated with the name is suited to British notions of what is funny. And here our talker will probably become facetious, and give a comic description of the real original old-fashioned guy, with the helpless legs and the feet always turned the wrong way, with the bundle of matches, and the time-honoured lantern. These pleasantries, if our professor is fortunate enough to have by him a neighbour who is both unsophisticated and easily amused, will serve to while away much time, and to defer the moment when it shall become necessary to move on—not, indeed, to a new subject—but to a new section of the old one: such as the tendency of mankind to express its feelings by contriving artificial representations or effigies of those persons for whom it may have conceived a hatred or an admiration, burning or hanging the first with circumstances of ignominy, and distinguishing the last with a pretence of honourable burial and funeral processions.

It would be to some such variations as this that the discreet talker would diverge at last from his original or Guy Fawkes theme, keeping close to it still, however, discoursing on the favour with which the name of Guy seems to be regarded by the novelists of our day, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of a *chaise-à-porteurs* as a means of conveyance, and only at an advanced period of the entertainment getting so far from the subject first introduced, as to touch lightly on fireworks and bon-fires generally. By this time it will, perhaps, be as well to have something else ready. And that something else, let me add, is pretty sure to turn up; for a good beginning has been made, the talk is fairly set going, and the winning game is always an easy one to play.

And now let us consider for a moment the reverse case—the case of that misguided and ill-advised talker who neglects this precious and economical system of subject-squeezing, and who treats the different topics at his disposal, as the Government officials do their quill pens, using them once only, and then throwing them aside as worthless. This talker, whose example is here held up as a warning to the sagacious, will—to return to our first example—begin his conversation on the 15th of July, just as our other and more skilful practitioner did, with the St. Swithin's legend,—but with what different result! As soon as he has made the discovery that his neighbour is incredulous concerning the popular superstition, instead of seeing in this very condition of her mind an opening of prodigious value for starting an argument, or offering an explanation, he merely finds discouragement in this expression of incredulity, foolishly drops the subject, allows a pause of some minutes to occur, and then begins afresh by asking the unfortunate being beside him, “If she rides in the Park?” Nor does

even the utterance of this most wretched formula in reality serve his turn. Although he is answered this time in the affirmative, such reply is apparently just as disconcerting to him as the negative which met his previous St. Swithin question. From riding in the Park to riding in general, and thence to a selection of anecdotes of that noble animal the horse, one would imagine would be a natural transition ; nay, a man who knew his business would be able to bring the talk from such a starting-point as this to other kinds of riding, such as dromedary-riding, or elephant-riding. But our conversational spendthrift attempts nothing of the sort. Riding in the Park suggests nothing to him, but the fact that he had found this pastime a very hot one on that particular morning, a circumstance which he hastens to communicate to his partner : "Very hot there this morning," he says, and then this theme is abandoned like the last ; and "Did you go to the Paris Exhibition ?" or some other question of the same worth, follows in another detached and spasmodic burst.

There is no mistake with which I am acquainted so entirely and finally ruinous to any one who aspires to become even a moderately successful talker, as this one of dancing off from one subject to another. It is the great danger against which I would caution the talk-student. It is the rock ahead on which a light should burn by night, and on which a bell should sound by day, to warn the conversational mariner off.

XIV.—THE SAME.

KEEPING still to our observation of the habits of a first-class talker, we shall note,—

4. That he will, to some extent, prepare his talk beforehand.

Those persons who live temporarily, or permanently, in the same house with a professed talker will remark that there are seasons when he will, for a short time—under pretext of writing letters, or engaging in some other necessary occupation—deny himself the company of his fellow-men, and seek a temporary retirement. Depend upon it, when our conversationalist thus secludes himself, he is engaged in drawing up the *menu* of his table-talk. Of course he does not do this in an elaborate or formal manner. Sydney Smith once drew up a conversation-programme, of the fullest kind, for some young friends of his who complained to him that they did not know what to say to their partners when engaged in quadrille-dancing. Our adept does not go so far as this. He merely makes a few mental notes of subjects suited to the time and place. "The rector is coming to dinner to-day," he says to himself, as he prowls about the village, outside his friend's park-gates. "Let's have a look at the church. Yes ; I see. Main part of the building early English : west window later, perpendicular. What's this ?—a doorway stopped up ! cavity in the wall close by—looks like a receptacle for holy-water. Holy-water out-side the church is uncommon, surely ; that'll do. Here's a curious old monument,

too. Family on their knees—descending scale. Father and mother, grown-up and growing-up children of different sizes, down to small boy and girl at the back. Inscription illegible—ask about it." Sometimes our diligent friend gets other people to assist him in making his preparations, they being all the time profoundly ignorant of what he is at. "Sir John Duckfield coming here to-day, ain't he?" he inquires of his host. "Norfolk man is he? what part of the county?" He is informed that Sir John's estates are near the "Broads" on the east coast. "Oh, yes, I've heard," he goes on. "Great place for wild-fowl, isn't it? Wild-fowl and decoys, and snipe-shooting—that sort of thing?" Such questions as these he will put quite carelessly, but rely on it, they are not asked without intention. The wild-ducks and the decoys will be heard of again at dinner-time when the Norfolk squire arrives, and perhaps our friend will, in the meantime, just drop into the library for half-an-hour, and have a look at Bewick. He visits that particular apartment, by the way, not unfrequently. Allusions to past events are eminently successful on certain occasions, and is not the *Annual Register* one of those books which no gentleman's library should be without? Here, too, the more modern volumes from Mudie's ~~are~~ garnered up, and the Reviews. A man must know something of the literature of the day if he expects to acquit himself creditably in the talking way.

And if this kind of preparation is necessary for a professed talker, such as this one just quoted, how much more is it indispensable to the inexperienced and unready beginner? Let the neophyte, then, by all means, as occasion serves, get himself up beforehand for his conversational duties. His preparation need not, after all, be very elaborate. Sometimes, if he is pushed for time, a rapid mental act, which can even be engaged in while he is dressing for dinner, will do. What is uppermost in people's thoughts just now? he will say to himself, as he ties his cravat. And then he runs over in his mind the different events, public and private, with which the world—or, at least, that section of it to which he belongs—is at that moment occupied. And so he manages to secure two or three subjects which will do to fall back upon in case of emergency, which is, after all, the essential. Very likely, if the conversation breaks well for him, he will not want them. Still it is better that he should have this reserve fund by him, if only because it gives him confidence,—the quality, of all others, which a talker most requires. It is possible that, in the course of time, he will be able to dispense with this system of preparation, which is most desirable, the preparing conversation beforehand being a somewhat ignoble act, which I only venture to inculcate *sub rosa*.

There is no doubt, also, that it is possible to carry this system of preparing beforehand for possible conversational emergencies too far. There was once a very worthy gentleman, known to the writer of these chapters, who always took care to have something by him ready to let off on occasions of chance meeting in the street; so that when he ran against you suddenly in Piccadilly he would begin—almost before the first greetings were exchanged

—“There is a report printed in the last number of the *Edinburgh* which gives the whole of the figures of the Registrar’s returns for a period of four years from last March, and which is highly interesting ;” or he would ask you in the middle of Bond Street “if you were acquainted with the theory just issued by Professor Startler, that everything in the world—‘ everything, the very stick I carry in my hand ’—is made up of infinitesimal atoms, all invisible, and all perpetually in motion ? ” Nay, so far did this good gentleman carry his system of preparing beforehand for these chance meetings, that he even kept by him little speeches adapted to special individuals of his acquaintance, and to no others : a complimentary word or two about his picture at the Royal Academy, for his friend the artist ; a question on a knotty point in a law case just then creating considerable sensation, for the barrister ; or a criticism on his last lecture at the Royal Institution, for the professor. No doubt it is a grievous business when two people, each in a preoccupied state, meet one another in the street, and, having shaken hands, find that they have nothing whatever to say, and remain entirely speechless ; or worse, say things better left unsaid, one of the pair so meeting, in pure awkwardness and embarrassment, uttering some statement which should not on any account be made, blurting out some secret, or making some allusion which is very painful to the person he is addressing, and which, in a collected moment, he would rather cut out his tongue than give utterance to ; while as to the nonsense which those sudden meetings occasionally lead men to talk—“ What, are you in town ? ” or, “ Aren’t you gone to Paris yet ? ”—we are all acquainted with it to our cost. Still, melancholy as are such catastrophes, I yet hold that the precautions taken by my friend, to secure himself against mischances of this sort, were excessive in degree, and not to be generally recommended ; and more especially would I caution the reader against that practice of preparing beforehand speeches which are of only individual application, as it is very easy in such cases to make some great mistake, and, in a confused moment, to congratulate (as my friend once did) the barrister on the success of his picture, and the artist on the great profundity of his legal attainments.

But setting aside the use of such excessive precautions against a conversational break-down as those which we have last considered, there is no doubt that a certain amount of preparation for what is coming is good for those who feel themselves to be only moderately gifted for the encounter which takes place night after night on our social battlefield. Yes, it is good to be a little primed beforehand. See how the public speaker primes himself beforehand, spending the morning in mastering the statistics of the charity, whose claims he is to press in the evening, or prowling about for hours among the pictures on the Academy walls, on the day of the annual dinner, in order that he may make some graceful allusions to those works of art when the proper time comes. This is how the public speaker acts invariably, and what after all is public speaking but talking on a large scale. It should, however, be borne in mind that

you are never to rest contented in this practice of preparing your talk. You must intend ultimately to get rid of it, as the swimmer does of the corks which support his early floundering.

And now a few words as a sort of *résumé*, or summing-up of the main characteristics of this great talker whose conversational proficiency we have been trying so hard to reduce to something like a system. To begin with, it must always be borne in mind that this illustrious personage is not a talker with a speciality. He is neither the story-teller, nor the describer, nor the topicist, nor the gossip of our first chapters. He is not the incessant talker—of whom something perhaps hereafter. He is simply *the talker par excellence*, the man at the top of the conversational tree, on the uppermost round of the conversational ladder. We have been for some time trying to find out what is the system upon which a great genius of this sort proceeds. We have observed of him already that he always times what he has to say with discretion and judgment, that he chooses his audience—the person to whom he addresses his speech—with consummate care, that he works a subject thoroughly while he has it in hand, not flying discursively from one thing to another, and that, to some extent, more or less, he prepares his talk beforehand. There is, however, more than this to note concerning our model talker. There are touches of something akin to genius which it is hard to set down in black and white. A beginner in our art will sit and watch a man like this with wonder, and, if he happens to be of a weakly, generous temper, with admiration. Full of wonder, at any rate, he observes that this great talker has a prodigious power of hitting on the right thing to talk about, and also of dealing with it in such fashion that what he says gets listened to. There are readable books—books that one finds no difficulty in getting through; and there is hearable talk—talk that one listens to gladly. Such is the talk of our professor. He knows when to stop, when to make a break, when to interrupt himself with some trifle, lest he should seem to perorate. He watches his audience to make sure that he is keeping them in hand. He feels that it requires consummate tact to know when to drop a subject, and when to persevere with it. If it is wearisome, and at the same time *not likely to lead to anything*, he will let it go, but if—though at present troublesome—he sees his way to something good arising out of it by-and-by, he will persevere, even though the old lady opposite, whose means entitle her to forget her manners, should yawn in his face a hundred times more openly than she does. But our great talker is seldom wearisome. He has a light manner of handling even important subjects—for these are not the days of elaborate sentences and rounded periods—and can be facetious, too, at the right moment, returning all the more effectively, after he and others have indulged in this vein freely, to his original subject with something, but not too much of seriousness.

Those words, “and others,” in the last sentence remind me of another element in the proceedings of this model talker which must not be forgotten. He always takes care to bring in other members of the com-

pany into his talk. Other members—but of what sort? Well, this great talker is a “child of this generation, wiser than the children of light,” and in this as in other things, he acts judiciously. He always takes care to conciliate and get upon his side any really dangerous rival whom he may see at table. “You, my dear Serjeant Burfuz, will agree with me in this;” or, “You have had more experience in such cases than I have, what is your opinion?” There are some people in most companies of diners whom it is most desirable to conciliate, and some concerning whom a sharp practitioner like this present talker feels that it does not matter twopence whether they are conciliated or no. The representatives of the first of these two classes are chiefly those who are themselves talkers of distinction. Of these the man who is himself distinguished as a talker is ordinarily somewhat afraid. He knows that these others, who are in the profession too, can forward or retard his interests if they think proper. He is well armed, it is true, and can use his weapons well, but he knows that these, his *confrères*, are armed too, and that they are dexterous fencers, and will certainly take an opportunity of pinking him if in any way he is so unfortunate as to excite their displeasure. These, then, far more than such members of the society as may, through the possession of mere rank or riches, occupy a position of importance, he manages very carefully, bringing them, as has been said, into his talk, giving them opportunities of themselves holding forth in their turn, and listening while they do so on the great “caw me and I'll caw you” principle. As to the others—those who don't matter—our Glendoveer takes no heed of them. He talks through them and over them. He can afford to be rude to these, and of course, like a sensible man, he is. If one of these takes heart of grace, and actually interrupts him, his ordinary plan is to go on through such interruption, entirely ignoring it; while, if it is impossible to do this without risking a scene—which would be ridiculous and is therefore to be avoided—he merely waits till the person who has interrupted him has ceased to speak, and then, without even looking at him, or in any way acknowledging his existence, goes on again.

Not a pleasant person this, the reader will say perhaps, not a good-natured person, scarcely a commonly courteous person. I never said that he was. I only said that he was a great and successful talker. Alas! can anybody who is to be really successful in anything be altogether amiable, and considerate, and good-natured? From a great diplomatist or politician in his office, to a great beauty in her ball-room, can any one achieve a high position and yet be entirely urbane and kindly? Would not the first of these, if too amiable, be overwhelmed with office-seekers, with misunderstood geniuses, with crack-brained idiots generally; and would not the second, if only moderately good-natured, be the victim of all the conceited little snobs, and incapable performers, with whom every ball-room is tolerably well supplied? Is it not necessary to put others down, and to push them aside, if you would rise yourself? Is it not invariably through slaughter that men wade to thrones, be the realms over which such thrones dominate

of what sort—real or metaphorical—they may? At all events it is so with the conversational throne. The occupant of that high place will ordinarily be found to have reached it not without a considerable amount of social bloodshed, while he retains it much as boys do the position of "king of the castle," by ruthlessly pushing down all those who seek to ascend the perch on which he is mounted. And, after all, this disregard of the interests of others when they happen to clash with his own, this truckling to some of whom he is afraid, this contempt of others whom he can afford to despise—are not all these vices simply those which belong to conquerors of every kind, and does not our successful talker share them with a great many other illustrious persons who have achieved distinction in all sorts of ways? At any rate, he is not wanting in good qualities to set against his defects. He is useful in his generation, courageous and diligent. He takes prodigious pains to master each subject of the day as it comes up. Indeed, his life is one of continual effort from morning till night, and sometimes from night till morning. His day's work is by no means over when the mere business part of it is terminated, and when he takes his seat at the dinner-table. Indeed, it is a question whether the real town man, who lives in the world, can ever say that his day's work is over till the moment comes when at last he stands by the side of his bed, with the extinguisher in his hand, hovering over his bed-room candle. Nay, he may be obliged to suspend his purpose, and defer his repose, even at such a supreme moment as this, an idea entering his head which will be available for conversational use at the Richmond dinner to-morrow, and which must be noted down before the extinguisher finally descends. And this sort of life is, after all, very much to the liking of a man like this. The excitement is necessary to him, and he enjoys himself, perhaps, as much, though not in the same way, as the honest *bourgeois* who unbuttons the lower fastenings of his waistcoat as he sits down to dinner, and says to the neighbour with whom he shares his meal: "Now, Jones my boy, let's enjoy ourselves."

On Iron Forts and Shields.

To most persons it must appear in the highest degree surprising that after the years and money which have been spent in experiments upon iron armour, an important section of the subject should still remain imperfectly understood,—that a huge continent, so to express it, should exist to this day practically unexplored. Nevertheless this is literally the case. A few adventurous spirits have skirted the coasts or penetrated a short way into the interior ; but the continent remains for all useful purposes a *terra incognita*. The fact is, that our attention has been almost exclusively directed towards one phase of the subject, which, we have at last realised, by no means comprises the whole. The application of iron to defensive purposes has two sides : one, the application of iron to the defence of ships and floating batteries ; the other, the application of iron to the defence of forts and land batteries. Commonly these two subjects are jumbled up together, whereas in truth they demand separate consideration, and a very different treatment. They have their points of contact, but their paths lie for the most part in divergent directions. To the non-appreciation of this radical difference is mainly attributable the ignorance which prevails with regard to the defensive application of iron to forts. So intent have we been upon mail-coating our ships, so persistently have our principal experiments been directed to this point, that the complementary subject of mail-coating our forts has been in a very large measure lost sight of. But the defence and attack of forts are essentially different from the defence and attack of ships.* The quantity of iron which a ship can carry must always be limited ; considerations of bulk and weight here come into play which are absolutely of no account in the case of forts. A ship is, before all things, required to float, and its displacement imposes very clearly defined limits as to the weight of iron which can be defensively applied to it. A ship of war is also, as a general rule, required to be a sea-going, not a mere harbour vessel. This entails certain sea-going properties, to which a huge mass of iron stands in diametrical opposition. There are structural difficulties, too, in the case of ships, which fetter the hands of the armourer in a troublesome degree. Finally, a ship as a moving object, necessarily constructed of reasonable solidity and compactness, is scarcely exposed to that particular form of attack to which a fort is peculiarly liable. That is to say, a ship of average strength runs little chance of

* Our remarks, as a whole, have reference principally to iron-clad ships, as they at present exist, not necessarily to monitors and strange craft of the future, although many of the considerations must apply in a greater or less degree to all floating defences, however constructed.

being battered to pieces or breached by a series of heavy adjacent blows, or by salvoes of artillery. If the ship should remain stationary in action, or be surprised at anchor, it would of course be exposed to very much the same conditions of attack as a fort. But for practical purposes we may regard a war vessel as a moving object, while a land fort is essentially and necessarily a fixed defence; and in this distinction is comprised the main difference between the two. This distinction at once limits the application of armour to a ship, while in the case of a fort, it enables that limit to be disregarded. And, as a moving object, even in the present state of artillery science, is no easy mark,* it follows that no system of attack which has its root in the accurate and certain delivery of a number of shots within a limited area,† is to be relied upon against shipping. Such a system is the system of attack by "racking." That attack, to be successful, must begin and end with prolonged, concentrated effect. And knowing as we do how much battering a vessel of ordinary structure and even average stoutness will endure before the general fabric is vitally injured, we may elect for practical purposes to disregard the racking attack as directed against iron-clad ships of war. The alternative and abstractedly superior method of attack is by penetration, and the distinct appreciation of this fact has properly governed the construction both of our ships and of the ordnance with which we should attack the ships of our enemies. It is evident, moreover, that the more destructive we make the effect of a single penetration, the nearer shall we be to the accomplishment of our object. To depend upon destroying a vessel by riddling it with several shot would be open to nearly the same objections—the same in kind, at least, if not in degree—as it would be to rely for victory upon the destruction of the vessel's structure. Both systems entail hitting the vessel so many times that a condition is imposed in either case which cannot be ensured. Therefore we have endeavoured in this country to apply the penetrative attack in its most intense and expeditious form. If one projectile can do the work, so much the more likely is it that the work will be done. It is indisputable that the effect of a single shell entering a vessel is vastly more destructive, vastly more fatal and demoralizing, than any effect which is likely to proceed from the entry of a single shot. Indeed, originally (although this point is too often lost sight of) ships were armour-clad to keep out shell rather than shot. Therefore, if we can succeed in introducing shell into the hull of an enemy, we shall be so much nearer the accomplishment of our object than if we merely succeeded in effecting an entry with shot. This is precisely the end towards which

* Although the accuracy of artillery fire has been largely increased by the introduction of rifled cannon, it must be borne in mind that the size and weight of the guns, and consequently the time in training them upon a moving, ever-restless object, have increased in, perhaps, a greater ratio; and it is doubtful whether the total result, *as against such a moving object*, is not rather a loss than a gain of accuracy.

† To obtain racking effect the blows must fall together, the size of the ship is, therefore, of little account in a racking attack.

all our energies have been directed. We are not content, as the Americans are, to riddle a ship with shot; nor are we content, as the Americans once professed to be, to rely upon the tedious, probably hopeless, effect of battering the vessel to pieces. We desire to do our work more expeditiously, more completely, and more certainly; and, for this purpose, we aim, above all things, at nothing short of the highest development of the penetrative attack—the successful application of shell-fire. Conversely, our vessels are designed specially with a view to keeping out, if possible, the shells of an enemy.

It would be well if, in respect of the attack and defence of forts, we acted upon principles as sound and as well defined. The conditions here are sensibly different. We have at once a stationary object of attack in place of a moving one; and we have an object which will bear any amount of iron that we can afford to put upon it. The limit here is the limit imposed by considerations of economy;* but as such considerations ought always to be subordinated to efficiency, we may fairly regard a properly constructed fort, or land defence, as at least secure against perforation. Here, then, failing penetrative effect, we must fall back upon the racking attack; and it so happens that this is the very attack to which a fort, as a fixed object, is peculiarly exposed. It is very much more easily hit than a ship; and assuming that the shots can be delivered with sufficient accuracy to strike within reasonable proximity of one another, we are at once assured of those primary conditions which go to produce racking or battering effect. Moreover, the exposed area of an iron fort being small, nearly every shot which strikes it will add its effect to that of the shot before it. In short, the broad distinction which exists between ships and forts in this matter is as follows:—Ships are difficult to rack, but may generally be penetrated; forts ought to be invulnerable to penetration, but are, to some extent, exposed to racking.

We propose, in the present article, to summarise our little acquired knowledge on the iron land defence question; to consider our present actual position with regard to such defences; and to indicate the nature of the improvements which we conceive must be applied before those defences can be regarded with confidence or satisfaction.

Although the subject of the defensive application of iron to land forts has never been properly or fully considered, it has, off and on, engaged the attention of scientific and military men for many years. The first and most natural protection for men to seek was a protection for their own bodies. Such a protection was found for several centuries in the body armour which archaeologists still love to describe; and the prototype

* The difference in this respect between ships and forts was well expressed by the Special Committee on Iron:—"Whilst in a ship the thickness of iron must be in proportion to the size and buoyancy of the vessel, there is no limit, save that of expense, to the quantity which may be applied to the construction of a fort; and in the latter case, the question resolves itself into this, *viz.*, what is the least expensive mode of applying iron in a form which will afford the requisite *dégrée* of protection."

of the Gibraltar shield is to be found in the shields which the warriors of old bore before them in battle. Then, as now, different constructions of armour had their supporters and detractors. Not to go back to the times when only leather or raw hides, and such like rude defences were employed, there was the chain-armour period and the plate-armour period; and we can fancy the busy discussion which doubtless raged over mail hoods and solid "bassinet," over helmets with flat tops and helmets with pointed tops, over chain suits and suits of armour plate, over "splintered" and solid breast-plates, over plain and "articulated" visors; the keen comparisons between the cost of this and the cost of that, the weights of the different suits, their efficiency, and the rest; just as, in these latter days, we do battle over laminated and solid plates, over flat-headed and pointed shot. Then came the time when the advance of gunnery science reduced armour to a useless incumbrance—a time which it is not impossible may some day repeat itself, when artillery shall reassert so decided a supremacy that armour shall once again be abandoned. Passing over the long intervening centuries during which armour was laid aside by every civilized nation, while different tactics became developed and new methods of warfare were contrived, we reach, not many years back, the period when men's minds reverted to the idea of meeting the new missiles with some opposing protection. But between this period and that of which we have spoken there was this characteristic difference:—The armour of the nineteenth century is applied not to individuals, but to men and matériel *en masse*. Our armoured "men-of-war" are men no longer, but huge vessels; our shields are ponderous defences, the cost of which is estimated in thousands of pounds, their weight in tons. Among the causes which led to the revival of iron armour, the development given, about the close of the last century, to horizontal shell-fire stands conspicuous, and each fresh step in artillery advance served to place the defences which had hitherto served at a greater disadvantage. In 1827 a proposition was made by an officer of Engineers, Major-General Ford, to use a material for the defence of forts better adapted to the exigencies of the day than any then employed. He suggested facing masonry forts with bars of wrought iron (fig. 1). This proposition was tested in the same year, at Woolwich. A block of Dundee stone, 6 feet by 5 feet, and 2 feet thick, was covered with 1½-inch wrought-iron bars, in two courses, of which the under layer was horizontal, and the upper vertical. The bars were attached by turning their ends over the flanks of the stone into dovetailed grooves. Twenty rounds were fired at this structure with a 24-pounder gun, at a range of 684 yards. The result was unsatisfactory. Nineteen of the front bars were broken, and five of the inner layer. Four of the bars were entirely broken off; and the stone was so pulverized and shaken as, in the words of the committee, "to render further battering unnecessary."

It is not without interest to notice how many elements this first attempt to apply iron to land defence had in common with our last attempt in this

direction. Both consisted of successive layers of wrought iron, breaking joint; the difference between the bars of iron employed in the one and the planks used in the other being a difference of degree rather than of construction; both defences were tested with guns which inadequately represented the artillery power of the day; both were designed by Engineer officers; and both failed.

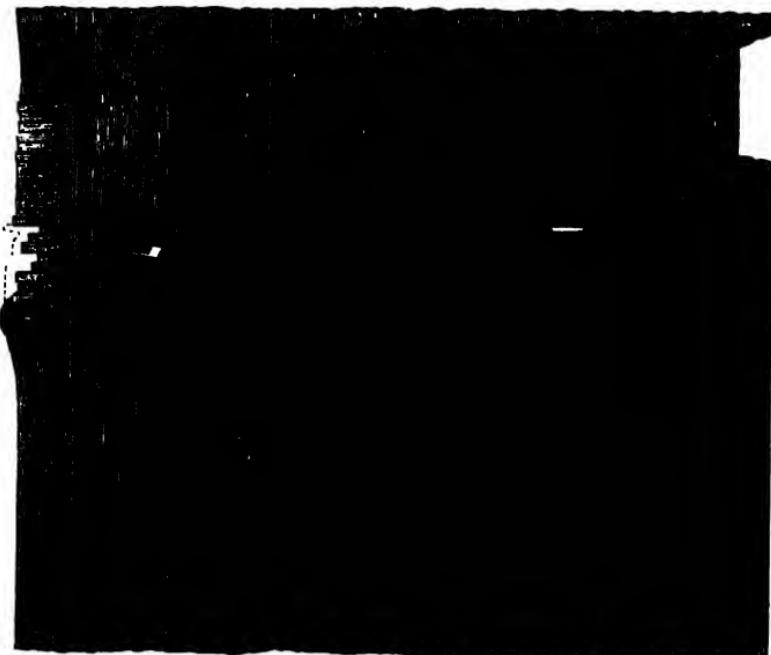


Fig. 1.—SHOWING STRUCTURE OF GENERAL FORD'S TARGET, AND ITS CONDITION AFTER THE EXPERIMENT.

After the failure of the Ford shield no attempt of the sort was renewed until 1840, although "considerable progress had been made in the meantime in the construction of iron ships for the mercantile marine." In 1840 the Admiralty instituted some fresh experiments, but these had for their object less the application of defensive armour than "to ascertain the value of iron as a material of construction for ships of war." The French were the first practically to apply iron to defensive purposes, and three iron-clad floating French batteries were engaged at Kinburn in 1855. In the preceding year, however, some important experiments had been made at Portsmouth with 4½-inch plates of iron opposed to 32-pounder and 68-pounder guns—the latter of which seriously damaged the targets, "cracking the plates wherever they struck and driving large fragments into the backing." In 1856 4-inch plates were fired at Woolwich with similar results. From this time to the present each year has witnessed new experiments against iron-plated structures. The forming of targets,

infinite in construction, has proceeded with scarcely any intermission for about twelve years. It would be tedious and beside our purpose to attempt even to summarize these extensive experiments. But it is well to recognize the fact, as affording a starting point, that about 1855-6 we became thoroughly alive to the importance of the subject, and have striven with more or less industry at its solution ever since. The investigation of the progress made during this period becomes enormously simplified if we confine ourselves, as we now propose to do, to the more important experiments bearing upon land defence only, because unfortunately, as we have before stated, our attention has been almost exclusively concentrated upon the use of iron as a protection for ships.

In 1858 rifled guns were first brought into play, and the conditions of attack and defence became thereby altered and complicated. A "special committee on iron-plates and guns" was appointed in 1859 (with General, then Colonel, St. George as president), and conducted a few experiments. But the committee was prematurely dissolved in the spring of 1860, before it had had time to elicit any useful results. About this period we come across the first really important experiment in connection with iron forts. A target, on what is called "Thorneycroft's plan" (figs. 2, 3), was tested by the Ordnance Select Committee. This target consisted of horizontal bars of rolled iron, 14 inches thick by about 4 inches deep, fitting into each other with tongues and grooves, and fixed together by bolts passing vertically through the bars. An embrasure was left in the centre of the target; and the whole was bedded in brickwork. The result of this experiment was deemed at the time to be so satisfactory that it was afterwards repeated, with a similar shield and with similar results. At the same time an embrasure with splayed sides, plated with wrought iron, was tested and unfavourably reported upon.

This was the position of the question when the Special Committee on Iron (Sir John Hay, president,) which was appointed on the 15th January, 1861, undertook its investigation. Some minor deductions had been arrived at, and the Thorneycroft system appeared to be possessed of some merit; but as the whole of the experiments made up to this time had been carried out with comparatively feeble guns, and as rifled



Fig. 2. SECTION OF THORNEYCROFT'S SHIELD.

artillery had now acquired an established position which was improving daily, and as the small amount of attention which the subject had received was altogether disproportionate to its importance, it may be said that the Special Committee on Iron found little that was really useful made to their hands. Practically it was necessary for them to undertake the investigation *ab ovo*; to invite suggestions from engineers and iron makers; to sift the wheat from the chaff; to establish distinct and reliable principles; and, briefly, to say how, if iron was to be defensively applied at all, it could be best, most economically and most profitably used, having regard at once to military and mechanical considerations.

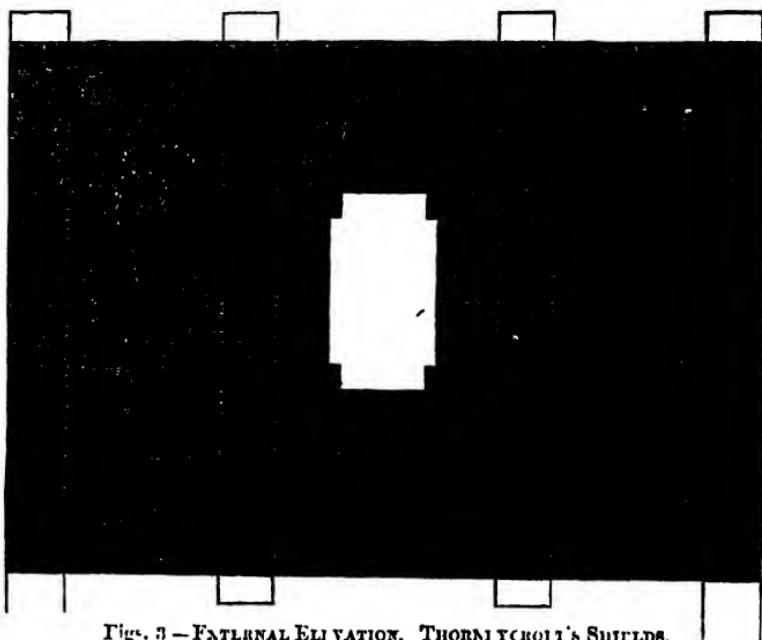


Fig. 3.—EXTERNAL ELEVATION. THORNEYCROFT'S SHIELDS.

The encouraging results of the trial of the Thorneycroft shields, and the simplicity and economy of the plan, induced the committee to continue experiments with this construction. A Thorneycroft shield, composed of bars 10 inches thick, was fired at soon after the appointment of the committee. But on this occasion a new and more powerful rifled gun—a 120-pounder—was brought into action; a gun small, indeed, as compared with the weapons now in use, but more powerful than any gun which iron targets had up to that time been required to withstand. The result was unfavourable to the Thorneycroft construction: the tongues were sheared, the bars fractured and displaced; and, generally, "such an effect was produced upon the target as to show that it was incapable of resisting the heavier natures of ordnance or shot above 100 lbs. in weight."

A target of a different construction was afterwards designed for the committee by Mr. Fairbairn, one of its members. This target consisted of 5-inch vertical armour-plates, bolted direct on to an iron skin, without any wood backing. Subsequently, a similar target, with 4½-inch plates, was also tested (fig. 4). The results of these experiments were most important.



Fig. 4.
COMMITTEE TARGET.

In 1862, the experiment against the "Committee target" was repeated, but this time attention was paid to the preservation of the fastenings from fracture, by diminishing the effects of the concussion. Soft substances, such as felt dipped in tar and vulcanized india-rubber, were interposed between the plates and the iron skin, and elastic washers were applied to the bolts. The result was most striking. The same guns were used as in the former experiments, but the target was struck with 4,264 lbs. of shot, against 1,958 lbs. on the former occasion; and yet, whereas in the first experiment scarcely any of the bolts remained unbroken, in this instance one bolt only was broken. In short, directly the rigidity was taken out of the structure by the employment of an elastic backing and elastic washers, the destruction caused by concussion was almost entirely obviated, while the plates, as before, exhibited considerable resistance to penetration. It is not surprising after this to find the committee laying great stress upon the importance of protecting an iron target from the effect of concussion; and among the means of protection good large bolts, elastic washers under the bolts, and a wood or elastic backing

important. In the first trial the plates of the target were little injured even by the 120-pounder, but "the fastenings were weak, and allowed the plates to be displaced." Only three bolts were unbroken upon one side of the shield; eight bolts were broken by a single shot. The result "demonstrates," says the committee, "that however much the armour-plates may be supported by direct contact with a rigid backing of iron, and however desirable it may seem to exclude wood or other perishable materials from them, yet the concussion is so injurious to the fastenings of a rigid structure, that, in the present state of our knowledge, it would be unwise to recommend the abandonment of the backing." This important deduction touches one of the fundamental points in connection with iron defences, and is the first distinct recognition of the opposite nature of the two systems of attack, and of the necessity for rendering an iron fort as invulnerable to racking as to penetration. Taken in connection with a subsequent experiment, this result goes far towards establishing the disadvantages of a rigid, *however impenetrable*, structure.

In 1862, the experiment against the "Committee target" was repeated, but this time attention was paid to the preservation of the fastenings from fracture, by diminishing the effects of the concussion. Soft substances, such as felt dipped in tar and vulcanized india-rubber, were interposed between the plates and the iron skin, and elastic washers were applied to the bolts. The result was most striking. The same guns were used as in the former experiments, but the target was struck with 4,264 lbs. of shot,

stand prominent. In passing we may observe that the Admiralty, with that curious disregard of scientific and practical recommendations which has frequently led to such disastrous results, neglected for some two or three years to act upon that part of the committee's recommendations (an Admiralty committee, be it observed,) which had reference to the employment of substantial bolts. Although the committee stated at the beginning of 1862 that no bolts of less than 2 inches diameter ought to be used, the whole of our ships were, until 1864, fitted with bolts of only $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch diameter; while, as regards the construction of bolt, notwithstanding the very marked superiority of the Palliser bolt (reduced at the shank to the size to which they are reduced at the screwed end by the screw-thread), the Admiralty refrained from availing themselves of this construction until a year or two ago; and as regards the material of bolt, the "Acadian" iron, which the committee found to be superior to ordinary iron in the ratio of 2 to $1\frac{1}{2}$, has never been adopted; and, finally, the method of attachment by means of bolts screwing into the wood, "the marked success of which induced the committee to recommend the plan for further trial," has never from that day to this been tried again. These are incidental illustrations of the manner in which results, arrived at by careful and considerable experiment, are too often perversely disregarded.

To return, however, to land forts. Some experiments were made in January, 1862, against a target proposed by Mr. Hawkshaw (fig. 5), on a

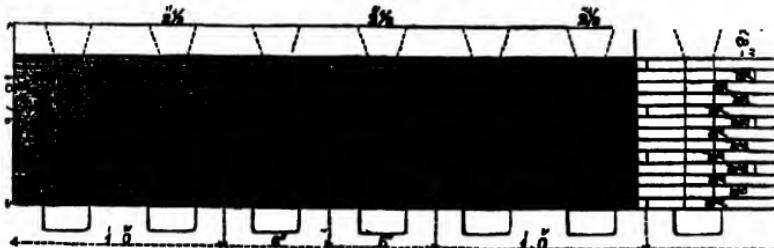


Fig. 5.—HAWKSHAW TARGET.

plan which had found much favour in the United States of America, viz., the employment of laminated armour in lieu of thick plates. Mr. Hawkshaw thus explained the reasons which induced him to recommend this construction: "Such a mode of construction would be that which would be most available for fixing armour plates to a vessel's side. But he was quite aware, and he had stated before the targets were made, that plates so laminated would not be so successful in resisting shot as if they were welded into one solid mass. On the other hand, such an arrangement of the plates afforded great facilities of construction. By its means the thickness of the plating could be increased or diminished as required, and the iron could be wrought into any form which might be thought desirable. A ship or a fort could thus be made more structurally perfect than by any other system with which he was acquainted; and at present he was not

aware of any other plan so good for securing a homogeneous structure." The Hawkshaw targets were composed of laminations of 5-8th-inch iron. One of the targets was faced with a 1½-inch, the other with a 2-inch plate. Their respective thicknesses were 6 and 10½ inches. The results of these trials were not encouraging, and the final conclusion arrived at by the committee was that these targets were "very weak in proportion to the quantity of metal they contained."

By this time some progress had been made with the inquiry ; or more properly to express it, a fair start had been effected. Targets composed of layers of bars had failed ; targets on the Thorneycroft plan had failed ; targets of laminated plates had failed ; and each of these targets represented, in some sense, a typical construction. The solid plate system had furnished the most hopeful results, and in the course of the trials of that system, it had become obvious that the details of attachment were of immense importance, and that *a purely rigid structure was absolutely inadmissible*. It would have been well if this one ray of light had been cherished and thenceforward applied to penetrate the obscurity in which the subject was enveloped. It might have shown the path to very different results



Fig. 6.—INGLIS SHIELD.

from those which, groping and stumbling along without it, we have at last arrived at. But this was not to be ; and in 1862 a target, proposed by Captain Inglis, R.E., which embodies the system of construction which has since been applied in the Gibraltar shields, was erected and experimented

upon. The first target "consisted of planks of wrought iron, 5 inches thick, crossing each other in alternate layers, and secured by screw bolts passing through their centres, the whole being supported by diagonal boiler-plate struts at each end. The shield was 15 inches thick, in 8 planks, on one half its area, and 10 inches thick, in 2 planks, on the other half (fig. 6).

A second shield on the same principle was made of two layers, the front layers being 6 inches, 7 inches, and 8 inches thick, and the rear layers 5 inches thick. In all cases elastic washers of various descriptions were used, but in other respects the shields were rigid structures, being independent of wood backing. Thus the clue which had been touched in connection with the trial of Mr. Fairbairn's target was dropped, and, we may say at once, has never been fairly taken up again.

It is unnecessary to detail the various experiments which were carried out by the committee against these two targets; but the results of those experiments were such that they were able to report in favourable terms generally of this system of construction. They state that "Captain Inglis appears to have succeeded in producing a shield well adapted for the purpose intended. The fastenings stood the test remarkably well."—(Report 1862.) "Our experiments have shown that a good shield for coast batteries can be obtained at a reasonable cost by the use of two layers of plates, or rather planks of wrought iron, crossing each other, and secured through their centres by screw bolts."—(Report 1862.) "The shield is by far the best which has yet been tried for land purposes."—(Report 1863.) "The shields answered well, and have formed the best structure of the kind that we have yet met with."—(Report 1864.) "The construction appears to combine strength, simplicity, and cheapness of manufacture."—(Report 1862.) Favourable as is the expression of opinion which these passages convey, they do not exhaust the merits of the "plank upon plank" system of construction. This system possesses, over and above its cheapness, strength, and simplicity, the considerable merit of being easily erected and repaired; and the merit not less conspicuous of adaptability to the exigencies of the day, or of the particular position which the shield may be required to occupy, by the addition or subtraction of armour, according to circumstances. It remains now to connect the successful Inglis shield of 1862 with the unsuccessful Gibraltar shield of five years later. The explanation of the very opposite results which have attended the trial of the two structures is to be found, in some large measure, in the words, "five years later." During those five years the power of ordnance has been enormously developed. There has been a steady growth on the side of the attack, which must place the defence, should it remain stationary, at a sensible disadvantage. It will, perhaps, be urged here, that while the Gibraltar shield failed under the blows of a 250-pounder (9-inch) gun and 48 lbs. of powder, the Inglis shield was tested with a 200-pounder gun and 45 lbs. of powder; and that, therefore, any difference in the ordnance employed is rather in favour of the Gibraltar

shield. This argument overlooks the very important consideration that the Inglis shield was fired at only with a *cast-iron* 800-pounder projectile, while the Gibraltar shield was exposed to the attack of Palliser shell.

Again, the attack of the Inglis shield was at 200 yards, that of the Gibraltar shield at 70 yards.

We would gladly stop here, and say that these altered conditions of attack fairly accounted for the opposite results of the two trials. Even if we did stop here, however, the conclusions to be drawn would be little creditable to those who are responsible for the Gibraltar shield, for it is surely inexcusable that, in a transitional state of artillery, a construction of defence should be adopted on a large scale, and applied without trial, solely on the grounds that that construction had satisfied the requirements of half a decade back. The duty which devolved upon the engineer department of the War Office, in designing shields for erection in 1867-8, was obviously to design such defences as would be capable of resisting, not merely the guns of 1862-3, but those of the more advanced period ; and this, even on the most moderate view of the circumstances, the engineer department failed to do. It will scarcely be credible if we add that, so far from increasing, as was evidently necessary, the strength of the shield, the engineers actually reduced it ; nay, that they did this in the face of the following decided expression of opinion on the part of the Iron Committee : —“*It appears that even the 15-inch shield, if constructed in three layers 5 inches thick, could not long resist such a gun as the 800-pounder, with large charges of powder . . . nothing less than 7½-inch iron will resist it. Probably, therefore, planks or plates, 8 inches thick, are the least that should be used in a coast battery.*” —(Report 1862, p. 117.)

In short, what has actually been done amounts to this :—A certain structure was reported, in 1862, to possess considerable advantages, absolute and abstract ; but even at that time the strongest applied form of that construction was officially pronounced incapable of resisting the guns of that day. Upon this, and without any further trials or experiments whatever, the officers who are called upon four or five years later to design suitable iron defences, adopt that construction, and proceed to apply it off-hand, in a form very much weaker than that which had been declared to be too weak already. Instead of three thicknesses of iron, they employ two ; instead of a total thickness of 15 inches, they give a total thickness of 12 inches ; instead of making the front plates, as even five years back was declared to be necessary, at least 8 inches in thickness, they employ plates of only 5½ inches ; and these structures they cause to be manufactured at a cost of 85,000*l.*, and to be issued to resist guns of infinitely greater power than those which had already sufficed to destroy the stronger construction. A train of blunders so carefully laid only needed the application of a match to flash forth a disastrous result ; and it is difficult to understand how any other consequences than those which actually ensued could have been anticipated. Indeed, the reluctance with which any experiments against the Gibraltar shield were undertaken, and the foolish attempt to

make the experiments secret, almost warrant the supposition that the failure was foreseen. What that failure amounted to may be told in a few words. The Gibraltar shield (fig. 7) consists of two thicknesses of iron, $5\frac{1}{2}$ and 5 inches respectively, and an iron skin of $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The total thickness is thus 12 inches. The shield is supported by struts and horizontal girders at the back.

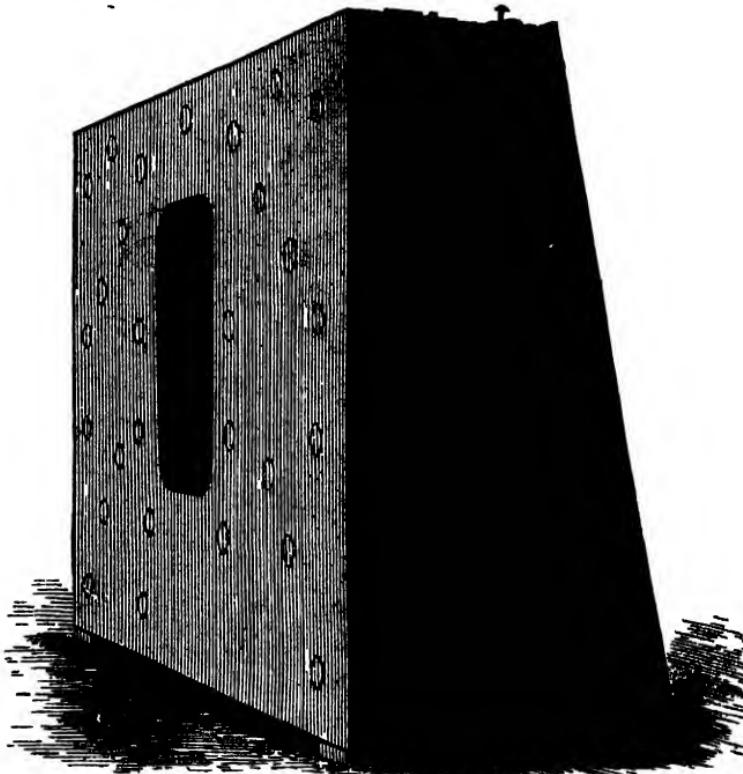


Fig 7.—GIBRALTAR SHIELD.

On the 25th October last, two shots were fired at the shield from the 9-inch rifled gun with reduced charges. Neither of these shots penetrated, but they sufficed to break nineteen of the bolts, and to drive the nuts and bolt-heads in a shower to the rear. The most important experiment, however, was that which took place on the 19th December, 1867, when five rounds were fired against the shield. Two of these rounds were 9-inch solid Palliser shot, with charges equivalent to a range of 400 yards; two 9-inch Palliser shells, with full charges, at 70 yards; and one 15-inch Rodman shot, with a charge equivalent to a range of 400 yards. The result was fatal to the shield, and not less damaging to the reputation of its designers. The girders behind the shield were broken, as were several bolts; the plates were cracked; the struts were bent; the whole struc-

ture was shaken ; and last, but not least, one of the Palliser shells, striking on a weak spot, actually penetrated the target with terrible destructive effect (fig. 8).



FIG. 8.—VIEW OF IRON SHIELD AFTER EXPERIMENT.

No ingenuity or "special" pleading could convert this experiment into anything but a disastrous failure ; and yet, as we have explained, it was a result which followed as a natural and inevitable consequence from the course adopted by the designers of the shield. Our object, however, is not to lavish strictures upon the engineer department. The story suggests its own comments ; and if the engineers deserve censure in this matter, most assuredly it has been dispensed to them with no niggard hand. And if more censure be needed, there is every prospect that it will be forthcoming when Parliament meets. We are now concerned, however, less with the shortcomings of a particular department than with the development of the iron land defence question ; and to trace this properly we must return to the Special Committee on Iron. We have seen to what point the committee had brought the subject ; we have seen particular systems condemned, and we have seen a particular system extolled. At the same time it is not less noticeable that the committee was very far

from having worked on this question. Some most valuable general principles it had indeed deduced. It had decided that soft wrought iron was the best known defensive material; that a plain, flat, solid plate, opposing a direct surface to attack, was a superior disposition of the metal to any other, and the larger the superficial area of the plate the better; that "tonguing and grooving" were objectionable; that a rigid backing increased the resistance to penetration, but that an elastic backing and elastic washers increased the resistance to concussive effect; that wood backings were indispensable (in their application to ships, the point being left open as regards forts); that wood facings were of little permanent value. These conclusions the committee expressed in no undecided terms, and these conclusions have since been generally accepted as sound fundamental propositions. But they had nearly all been arrived at in connection with the defence of ships—their application to the defence of forts being reserved by the committee for determination by further experiments. At this important stage of the inquiry the Admiralty thought fit to dissolve the committee, leaving the subject of iron forts to take care of itself, or worse still, as it has proved, to be taken care of by the engineers. It might have been expected that somebody would now have taken up the tangled threads and attempted some completion of the design. But the shuttle was not resumed. It presently occurred, it is true, to the Ordnance Select Committee to make an experiment, and for this purpose a most expensive granite casemate, protected partly by a Chalmer's target of great strength and partly by a solid 18-inch block of iron, was erected and fired at in 1865. It is impossible to say that this experiment had any practical result, since it was never concluded. As part of a series it might have been useful; but as an isolated and incomplete experiment it was virtually thrown away. One fact it did serve to throw into bolder relief, viz., the absolute uselessness of granite as a means of defence against modern artillery—in other words, the absolute necessity of deciding upon some useful application of iron. But of this fact no advantage was taken. The engineers proceeded complacently with their shields and forts according to their own preconceived notions, wholly innocent of any intention to look either to the right hand or to the left, backwards or forwards, to accept hints or suggestions, and with a magnificent resolution to permit, under no circumstances, anything of the nature of a thorough experimental investigation of the subject.

Such is in outline the history up to the present time of our iron forts, and a lamentable history it is. After years of desultory experimenting we have arrived at the point of realizing that we have no single reliable iron land defence, and that we have a great many which are little more than worthless. With regard to the iron forts (as distinguished from shields) now in process of construction, we have this encouragement, that it is possibly not yet too late to modify or reform their construction so as to render them not quite so worthless as the Gibraltar shields.

Assuming that the appreciation of these facts will lead to a systematic

inquiry into the whole question of the application of iron armour to land defences, we would offer a few general remarks bearing upon the subject. We set out by distinguishing between the defence of ships and the defence of forts. That distinction we explained as consisting mainly in the fact, that ships being limited in the thickness of armour which they can carry, and scarcely exposed to prolonged or concentrated battering, require before all things to be made secure against penetration ; forts, on the other hand, being unlimited in the thickness of their armour, and being specially exposed to repeated hammering upon a small area, if struck at all, are to be regarded as defences more liable to be racked than perforated. That the Gibraltar shield was both perforated and racked proves merely the extremely defective construction of this particular defence—the penetration being an abnormal effect, so to speak, superadded to the more natural effect of racking. In designing a fort it should therefore be laid down as a first necessity that the structure should if possible be rendered secure against racking ; secondly, and in the nature of a matter of course, that it should be impenetrable. It must be evident that a rigid structure is very much less likely to satisfy the first and more difficult of these conditions than one compounded of iron and an elastic backing. Theory and practice both go to establish this. “A wood backing,” says the Special Committee on Iron, “has the advantage of yielding in some degree to the distortion of the plate ; of distributing the effect over a larger area ; *of diminishing the damage to the general structure.*”—(Report 1862.) In other words, a wood backing is the main element of resistance to that racking effect to which a fort is especially exposed. In this fundamental particular the Gibraltar shield and similar structures fail, and we hold that any structure designed for a land fort (unless it be an enormous and therefore disproportionately expensive solid block of iron without attachments of any description) must without a wood backing, or its equivalent in some other form, be radically defective.

The principal argument against the use of a wood backing in forts is that it is perishable. The answer to this is twofold : 1st, That it is better and more economical to have an efficient defence for five or ten years than to be provided permanently with an inefficient one ; 2nd, That the problem of making a wood backing removable, so that it may be stored in peace time and applied only (as it is proposed to store and apply the greater part of the bolts of the Gibraltar shields) when the necessity arrives, is not insoluble.

Wood backings have other advantages besides the salient advantages of reducing the concussion and absorbing the force of the blow. They are useful also in preventing fragments of the iron from entering the vessel, and in holding in their places such portions of the plate as may be broken off, and retaining their services to a certain extent. This last point is of considerable importance where the structure is liable, like a fort, to be struck many times about the same spot.

In the next place, since the most dangerous and probable effect upon a fort is hammering to pieces, the bolts or other means of attachment

ought to be at a minimum with regard to quantity, and at a maximum as to strength and efficiency. The Inglis construction is again radically defective in this respect. It entails the use of a very large number of bolts; and in its last unfortunate application many of these bolts are obviously too weak. This was rendered curiously evident on the occasion of the first "secret" trial of the Gibraltar shield, when nineteen of the bolts were broken owing to a defect in their construction. In the last trial, when the bolts were made strictly on Major Palliser's system, the attachment proved much more secure, and comparatively few bolts were broken except those actually struck. But we believe that a great deal requires yet to be done towards the further improvement of the fastenings. The "Acadian iron," which furnished such good results when tried by the committee four years ago, and the iron screws into the wood-backing in lieu of through-bolts, might profitably be further experimented upon. The system of iron screws, we may notice in passing, has this advantage, that no bolt-heads or nuts are exposed at the back of the target, and, in the event of the failure of the fastenings, no missile matter of this description can be driven into the interior of the work. Elastic washers, packings of soft material round the bolts, bevelling of the bolt-holes, and similar contrivances which may be experimentally shown to diminish the tendency to fracture of the bolts, ought to be applied, as a matter of course, to the fastenings of iron structures.

Another source of weakness in the plank upon plank construction is comprised in the liability of the outer plates to shift over the inner plates under the blows of projectiles (particularly pointed projectiles striking at an angle), shearing the bolts as if they were cut with a huge knife. This is a different effect upon the bolts to that produced by concussion *pur et simple*; and, next to the absence of a wood-backing, this defect of construction is perhaps the most objectionable feature in the system. This ground of objection to the system is of very much more moment than the argument that "laminated" structures are inferior to solid plates in resistance to penetration. The loss of resisting power due to the employment of several thick plates in place of a single thicker one has been very much exaggerated. The Inglis or Gibraltar shields are not, in fact, "laminated" structures in the ordinary acceptation of the term, or, at least, not in that acceptation which infers material loss of resisting power. The Hawkshaw target (p. 197) was a laminated structure, and proved deficient in its power of opposing direct perforation. But when the layers are composed of *thick plates*, the weakness in this respect becomes sensibly diminished. This has been proved experimentally, and it is probable that three 5-inch plates would be equal at least to one 18-inch plate, instead of being equal merely to a plate of between 8 and 9 inches, as they would be if the rule of the sum of the squares of the thicknesses held good. This rule, however approximately correct it may be in the case of thin laminations (though even here it is liable to considerable deductions), fails in the case of thick

laminations, or stout layers as we should prefer to express it, to take into account the considerable increase of resisting power derived by one plate from the support afforded by those behind it; it fails also to take into account the non-liability of structures of this sort to crack through, as solid plates of almost any thickness will frequently crack even under blows a long way short of complete penetration. These corrections bring a *thick* compound structure almost on to a par with the single-plate construction in respect of resistance to penetration.

A far more capital defect in the Inglis construction, considered from the penetration point of view, is the weakness at the joints. This weakness was not so apparent when flat or round-headed projectiles were used; but the employment of pointed projectiles, the nose of which is liable to strike on a joint and to effect an entry by a short or easy cut, throws out this defect into conspicuous relief. In this respect the Gibraltar shield is an improvement on the Inglis shield, and for this improvement the engineers deserve more credit than they have received. The front layers of the present shields are composed of two large plates instead of several small planks; and there are thus only two joints (one on each side of the embrasure) exposed to the impinging projectiles. But the strength of a structure is to be measured at its weakest part; and this law received a striking confirmation on the occasion of the late trial, when the shell which penetrated did happen actually to strike upon a joint, and so got through. As large a superficial area of plate as possible was pronounced by the Special Committee on Iron to be desirable—and this without reference to the question of joints in their connection with pointed projectiles. It is therefore important that the front of the shield should consist of a single plate, without any joints whatever. Not less important is it to make this plate of such a thickness that it will be capable of taking most of the "work" out of the shot; and probably no guarantee of security in this respect would be afforded at the present day by plates of less than 9 or 10 inches. Such plates our iron makers are now able to produce at a cost of only 5*l.* or 6*l.* a ton in excess of the cost of a 5 or 5*½*-inch plate.

Applying these various considerations, which by no means exhaust the subject, to the Gibraltar shield, we not only see why the failure of the structure was inevitable, but we are tempted to doubt whether the system can ever be made to furnish, as against the guns of the present day, any useful results. The process of patching up would probably end in improving the shield off the face of the earth, and the outlay which such improvements would involve must be very considerable. Our suggestions, therefore, are offered less with reference to the existing shields than with reference to those which we may hereafter be called upon to design. We lay down as fundamental requirements for such shields—and for iron land forts generally—that they should be composed of as few parts as possible, consistent with a reasonable degree of economy; that the system of attachment should be the best that can be contrived; that the front plates should be large enough to check the blow; and that the wood-backing should be

capable of absorbing it. Non-observance of any one of these points is sufficient to ensure failure; what wonder, then, that the country should be now bewailing the expenditure of 85,000*l.* on shields which fail in every one of them.

The two main grounds of extenuation suggested on behalf of the designers of the Gibraltar shield are: 1st, That the shields were subjected to a more severe test than they were designed to stand; 2nd, That although seriously damaged, they still afforded "a fair amount of protection"—which is all that is desired. Both these arguments appear to us to embody serious fallacies. With regard to the shields having been tested with undue severity by the guns having been fired at 70 yards' range, while 400 yards had been laid down as the point of nearest possible approach for an attacking vessel, the argument would be forcible enough if the guns used had been the strongest of the day. We are inclined to think that no shield for land defence need be required to meet a closer attack than one at 400 yards' range; the guns of the fort itself, and a belt of torpedoes, ought to secure this. But, unfortunately, the damage which was wrought by the 9-inch gun at 70 yards, would be inflicted by the 10-inch gun at, probably, 1,000 yards, or even greater ranges. And the 10-inch gun is greatly inferior in power to the 12-inch and 18-inch guns now being built, as it is inferior to the 80-inch, if not to the 20-inch American smooth-bore.

As to the shield being required to afford only what is called "a fair amount of protection," that is a view which we are disposed utterly to scout. A shield, if supplied at all, ought in our opinion to be made as nearly as possible impregnable. It is reasonable and right to assume that it will be exposed to the deliberate attack of the most powerful guns which an enemy can bring against it, if he should see fit to attack it at all. It will be no question of a mere passing shot, of a half-hearted effort. If the destruction of a particular fort occupying an important position should form part of the plan of attack, an enemy worthy of the name would probably strain every energy to compass its destruction, and in order to do this would concentrate such a fire as only the strongest structures could withstand. To entice men into casemates which would soon come rattling about their ears, and which would lend their own hurtling fragments to their destruction, is simply to entice them into a trap, into which it would be very difficult to inveigle them a second time. Nothing is so intimidating, nothing so damaging to the morale of soldiers, as to find that their confidence is misplaced,—whether in a general, in an arm, in a position, or in defences built upon the sand.

Moreover, the men at the guns might be apt to be critical as to what constitutes "a fair amount of protection." They might reasonably object to accept the construction of the term which the engineers might arbitrarily assign to it; and most assuredly the bulk of artillerists would decline to regard the protection afforded by the Gibraltar shield as fair, or in any sense sufficient—whatever the designers might please to call it.

We have left ourselves little space to consider the iron fort question from the side of the attack ; but it is well to anticipate an objection which our arguments might suggest with regard to the suitability of our present guns for attacking such defences. If our present system of ordnance be designed specially with reference to the penetration of iron ships of war, and if, as we contend, such a mode of attack would be hopeless against a really well-built fort, it may seem to follow that our guns and projectiles can hardly be adapted for use against forts, whatever may be their merits against ships. This is true to a certain extent of our projectiles ; it is not true of our guns, or more properly of our system of ordnance. A brittle, pointed, Palliser projectile is no more suitable for racking heavy iron shields than would be a stiletto for smashing open a door. But the employment of our present guns by no means limits us to the use of such projectiles. On the contrary, a conspicuous merit of our system of ordnance, as compared with the smooth-bore system, is that it permits of the use either of a light shot of the most suitable penetrative form and material, with a high velocity, or a heavy shot, of the form and material best calculated to rack, with a low velocity. But undoubtedly projectiles of the latter description ought to form part of our ordnance stores, and it is high time that attention was seriously directed to this point.

This is no place for discussing the relative merits of smooth-bore and rifled guns as racking ordnance. Probably the advantages would be found to incline in this respect towards large smooth-bore guns, *at short ranges*. But this advantage would be more than counterbalanced on the whole by the very great superiority of the rifled gun at long ranges—at the ranges at which a ship would naturally desire to engage ; and by its superior accuracy.

Active measures ought now to be taken towards the establishment of a good system of vertical fire. We have not at present in the service a single rifled mortar ; but in view of the increasing impregnability of defences to horizontal fire, and of the difficulties which exist in the way of securing the same degree of impregnability to vertical fire, it is surely desirable that the development of a system of attack of this sort, whether against forts or ships, should be no longer neglected.

In conclusion, we would point the moral of this long story. It is, we think, plain enough, that the subject of iron forts has received far less attention than its importance deserves ; that, indeed, we have comparatively little connected experimental knowledge of it ; that an urgent necessity exists for an immediate and thorough investigation of the whole question of iron land defences. It should be worked out step by step, as the application of armour to ships has been worked out. We know of no better hands to which the inquiry could be confided than those of the Special Committee on Iron, which, having been recently revived by Sir John Pakington, is now sitting at the War Office. The instructions of the committee at present, we understand, extend only to pointing out the causes of failure of the Gibraltar shield, and to suggesting some plan for strengthening it.

But it is possible, as it is most desirable, to invite the committee to undertake the larger subject which now presents itself for solution. The subject cannot be profitably dealt with by a single department, for the simple reason that no single department is competent to exhaust all the various considerations, mechanical, metallurgical, and military, which belong to it ; nor, indeed, could any committee do this without engaging upon a series of careful experiments ; but it is just such a series of experiments that we deem it imperative should be forthwith undertaken, under competent and independent supervision.

Whatever body may be appointed to deal with the subject, it is indispensable that that branch of the service for whose immediate protection these defences are designed should be largely represented—we mean the artillery. Especially strong is the necessity for a considerable infusion of this element if the “fair amount of protection” theory is to receive any consideration. In this element, however, the Iron Committee is at present conspicuously deficient. There is only one artillery member ; and we would suggest, either the addition of one or more artillery officers, or—as the question is essentially a question of land defence—the appointment of an artillerist in place of the naval officer who at present officiates as president. It is right, however, to append to this last suggestion a distinct disclaimer of any intention to impugn Sir John Hay’s zeal or ability, to which, on the contrary, we would desire to bear grateful testimony.

My Neighbour Nelly.

CHAPTER I.



HEY were both my neighbours, of course ; but I do not understand what kind of hearts people have who can apportion their love equally, according to the claims of justice. I saw as much of one sister as the other. And Martha was an excellent girl, quite honest and friendly and good ; but as for Ellen, there never could be any question about her. One did not even think of discriminating which were her special good qualities. She was Ellen, that was enough ; or Nelly, which I prefer, for my part. We all lived at Dinglefield Green in the old days. It is a model of a village, in

one sense of the word ; not the kind of place, it is true, to which the name is generally applied, but a village orné, as there are cottages ornées. The real little hamlet, where the poor people lived, was at a little distance, and gave us plenty of occupation and trouble. But for Dinglefield Green proper, it was such a village as exists chiefly in novels. The Green was the central point, a great triangular breadth of soft grass, more like a small common than a village green, with the prettiest houses round—houses enclosed in their own grounds,—houses at the very least embosomed in pretty gardens, peeping out from among the trees. None of us were *very* rich ; nor was there anything that could be called a “place” in the circle of dwellings. But I believe there was as much good blood and good connection among us as are usually to be found in a much larger community. The great house opposite, which was separated from the Green by a ha-ha, and opened to us only a pretty sweep of lawn, looking almost like a park, belonged to Sir Thomas Denzil, whose pedigree, as everybody knows, is longer than the Queen’s. Next to him was Mrs. Stokes’ pretty cottage—one of the Stokes who have given their name to places all over the country : the son is now General Stokes, a C.B., and I don’t know what besides : and her daughter married Lord Leamington. Next to that—but it is needless to give a directory of the place,—probably our



MY NEIGHBOUR NELLY

neighbours, generally, may appear in their proper persons before my story is done.

The sisters lived next to me: my house lay, as their father said, athwart their bows. The Admiral was too much a gentleman to talk ship, or shop, as the gentlemen call it, in ordinary conversation; but he did say that my cottage lay athwart his bows; and the girls admitted that it would have been unpleasant had it been anybody but me: I was then a rather young widow, and having no children, did not want much of a house. My cottage was very pretty. I think myself that there was not so pretty a room in all the Green as my drawing-room; but it was small. My house stood with its gable-end to the Green, and fronted the hedge which was the boundary of Admiral Fortis's grounds. His big gate and my small one were close together. If the hedge had been cut down, I should have commanded a full view of the lawn before his house, and the door; and nobody could have gone out or come in without my inspection. They were so friendly, that it was once proposed to cut it down, and give me and my flowers more air; but we both reflected that we were mortal; circumstances might change with both of us: I might die, and some one else come to the cottage whose inspection might not be desirable; or the Admiral might die, and his girls be married, and strangers come. In short, the end of it was that the hedge remained; but instead of being a thick holly wall, like the rest of my enclosure, it was a picturesque hedge of hawthorn, which was very sweet in spring and a perfect mass of convolvulus in autumn; and it had gaps in it and openings. Nelly herself made a round cutting just opposite my window, and twined the honeysuckle into a frame for it. I could see them through it as I sat at work. I could see them at their croquet, and mounting their horses at the door, and going out for their walks, and doing their capricious gardening. It was Nelly only who ever attempted to work in the garden; the other was afraid of her hands and her complexion, and a hundred things. Nelly was not afraid of anything—not even of Mr. Nicholson, the gardener, who filled me with awe and trembling. Perhaps you may say that there was not much fear of her complexion. She was brown, to begin with; but the prettiest brown,—clear, with crimson flushes that went and came, and changed her aspect every moment. Her eyes were the softest dark eyes I ever saw; they did not penetrate or flash or sparkle, but glowed on you with a warm lambent light. In winter, with her red cloak on, she was the prettiest little figure; and the cold suited her, and made her glow and bound about like a creature of air. As for Martha, she was a great deal larger and whiter than her sister. I suppose, on the whole, she was the prettier of the two, though she did not suit me. They were their father's only children, and he was very fond of them. Their mother had been dead so long that they had no recollection of her; and the girls were not without those defects which girls brought up by a man are so apt to have. They were rather disposed to think that anything could be had for a little coaxing. Perhaps they had more confidence in their own blandishments

than is common with girls, and were more ready to use them, knowing how powerless papa was against their arts. They were badly educated, for the same reason. The Admiral was too fond of them to part with them ; and he was one of the men who fear reports and rumours, and would not have a lady, not even a middle-aged governess, in his house. He had expensive masters for his girls, and the girls did what they pleased with those excellent gentlemen, and grew up with the very smallest amount of education compatible with civilization. I rather liked it, I confess, in Nelly, who was very bright, and asked about everything, and jumped at an instant understanding of most things she heard of. But it did not answer in Martha's case, who was not bright, and was the sort of girl who wanted to be taught music, for instance, properly, and to practise six hours a day. Without being taught, and without practising, the good girl (for Nelly, as she explained, had no taste for music,) thought it her duty to play to amuse her friends ; and the result was a trial to the temper of Dinglefield Green. We had some very good musicians among us, and Martha heard them continually, but never was enlightened as to the nature of her own performance ; whereas Nelly knew, and grew crimson every time her sister approached the piano. But Nelly was my favourite, as everybody said ; and perhaps, as a natural consequence, I did her sister less than justice.

We led a very pleasant, neighbourly life in those days. Some of us were richer, and some poorer ; but we all visited each other. The bigger houses asked the smaller ones to dinner, and did not disdain to pay a return visit to tea. In the summer afternoons, if you crossed the Green (and could hear anything for the noise the cricketers made), you would be sure to hear, in one quarter or another, the click of the croquet balls, and find all the young people of the place assembled over their game, not without groups of the elder ones sitting round on the edge of the well-mown lawns. When I settled there first, I was neither young nor old, and there was a difficulty which party to class me with ; but by degrees I found my place among the mothers, or aunts, or general guardians of the society ; and by degrees my young neighbours came to be appropriated to me as my particular charge. We walked home together, and we went to parties together ; and, of course, a little gossip got up about the Admiral —gossip which was entirely without foundation, for I detest second marriages, and, indeed, have had quite enough of it for my part. But Nelly took a clinging to me—I don't say a fancy, which would be too light a word. She had never known a woman intimately before—never one older than herself, to whom she was half a child and half a companion. And she liked it, and so did I.

There was one absurd peculiarity about the two girls, which I shall always think was the foundation of all the mischief. They never called each other, nor were called by their names. They were "the Sisters" to everybody. ~~and~~ I suppose it was a fancy of their father's—he called them "the Sisters" always. They called each other Sister when

they spoke to or of each other. It annoyed me at first, and I made an attempt to change the custom. But Martha disliked her name. She had been called after her grandmother, and she thought it was a shame. "Martha and Ellen!" she said, indignantly. "What could papa be thinking of? It sounds like two old women in the almshouse. And other girls have such pretty names. If you call me Martha, Mrs. Mulgrave, I will never speak to you again." When one thought of it, it was a hard case. I felt for her, for my own name is Sarah, and I remember the trouble it was to me when I was a girl; and the general use and wont of course overcame me at last. They were called "the Sisters" everywhere on the Green. I believe some of us did not even know their proper names. I said mischief might come of it, and they laughed at me; but there came a time when Nelly, at least, laughed at me no more.

It was in the early summer that young Llewellyn came to stay with the Denzils at their great house opposite. He was a distant cousin of theirs, which was a warrant that his family was all that could be desired. And he had a nice little property in Wales, which had come to him unexpectedly on the death of an elder brother. And, to crown all, he was a sailor, having gone into the navy when he was a second son. Of course, being a naval man, it was but natural that he should be brought to the Admiral first of all. And he very soon got to be very intimate in the house; and, indeed, for that matter, in every house in the Green. I believe it is natural to sailors to have that hearty, cordial way. He came to see me, though I had no particular attraction for him, as cheerfully as if I had been a girl, or alas! had girls of my own. Perhaps it was the opening in the hedge that pleased him. He would sit and look, but he did not speak to me of the sisters,—more's the pity. He was shy of that subject. I could see he was in real earnest, as the children say, by his shyness about the girls. He would say something about them, and then rush on to another subject, and come back again half-an-hour after to the identical point he had started from. But I suppose it never occurred to him that I had any skill to fathom that. He went with them on all their picnics, and was at all their parties; and he rode with them, riding very well for a sailor. The rides are beautiful round Dinglefield. There is a royal park close at hand, where you can go and hide yourself in grassy glades and alleys without number. I have even been tempted to put myself on my old pony, and wander about with them on the springy turf under the trees; though, as for their canterings and gallopings, and the way in which Nelly's horse kicked its heels about when it got excited, they were always alarming to me. But it was a pleasant life. There is something in that moment of existence when the two who are to go together through life see each other first, and are mysteriously attracted towards each other, and forswear their own ideal and all their dreams, and mate themselves under some secret compulsion which they do not understand,—I say there is something in such a moment which throws a charm over life to all their surroundings. Though it be all over for us;

though, perhaps, we may have been in our own persons thoroughly disenchanted, or may even have grown bitter in our sense of the difference between reality and romance, still the progress of an incipient wooing gives a zest to our pleasure. There is something in the air, some magical influence, some glamour, radiating from the hero and the heroine. When everything is settled, and the wedding looms in sight, fairyland melts away, and the lovers are no more interesting than any other pair. It is, perhaps, the uncertainty, the chance of disaster; the sense that one may take flight or offence, or that some rival may come in, or a hundred things happen to dissipate the rising tenderness. There is the excitement of a drama about it—a drama subject to the curious contradictions of actual existence, and utterly regardless of all the unities. I thought I could see the little sister, who was my pet and favourite, gradually grouping thus with young Llewellyn. They got together somehow, whatever the arrangements of the party might be. They might drive to the Dingle, which was our favourite spot, in different carriages, with different parties, and at different times; but they were always to be found together under the trees when everybody had arrived. Perhaps they did not yet know ^{it} themselves; but other people began to smile, and Lady Densil, I could see, was watching Nelly. She had other views, I imagine, for her young cousin, since he came to the estate. Nelly, too, once had very different views. I knew what her ideal was. It, or rather he, was a blond young giant, six feet at least, with blue eyes, and curling golden hair. He was to farm his own land, and live a country life, and be of no profession; and he was to be pure Saxon, to counterbalance a little defect in Nelly's race; or rather, as she supposed, in her complexion, occasioned by the fact that her mother was of Spanish blood. Such was her ideal, as she had often confided to me. It was funny to see how this gigantic and glorious vision melted out of her mind. Llewellyn was not very tall; he was almost as dark as Nelly; he was a sailor, and he was a Welshman. What did it matter? One can change one's ideal so easily when one is under twenty. Perhaps in his imagination he had loved a milk-white maiden too.

Lady Densil, however, watched, having, as I shall always believe, other intentions in her mind for Llewellyn, though she had no daughter of her own; and I am sure it was her influence which hurried him away the last day, without taking leave of any of us. She kept back the telegram which summoned him to join his ship, until there was just time to get the train. And so he had to rush away, taking off his hat to us, and almost getting out of the window of the carriage in his eagerness, when he saw us at the Admiral's door, as he dashed past to the station.

"Good-by, for the moment," he shouted; "I hope I am coming back." And I could see, by the colour in Nelly's cheek, that their eyes had met, and understood each other. Her sister bowed and smiled very graciously, and chattered about a hundred things.

"I wonder why he is going in such a hurry? I wonder what he means about coming back?" said Martha. "I am sure I am very sorry he is

gone. He was very nice, and always ready for anything. What a bore a ship is! I remember when papa was like that,—always rushing away. Don't you, Sister? but you were too young."

"I remember hearing people talk of it," said Nelly, with a sigh.

She was *rueuse*, clouded over, everything that it was natural to be under the circumstances. She would not trust herself to say he was nice. It was I who had to answer, and keep up the conversation for her. For my own part, I confess I was vexed that he had gone so soon—that he was gone without an explanation. These things are far better to be settled out of hand. One goes away; but nobody can make sure how one may come back,—or what one may find when one comes back. I was sorry, for I knew a hundred things might happen to detain, or keep him silent; and Nelly's heart was caught, I could see. She had been quite unsuspecting, unfearing; and it was gone ere she understood what she was doing. My heart quaked a little for her; not with any fear of the result, but only with a certain throbbing of experience and anxiety that springs therefrom. Experience does not produce hope in the things of this world. It lays one's heart open to suspicions and fears which never trouble the innocent. It was not because of anything I had seen in Llewellyn; but because I had seen a great deal of the world, and things in general. This was why I kissed her with a little extra meaning, and told her to lie down on the sofa when she got home.

"You have not been looking your best for some days," I said. "You are not a giantess, nor so robust as you pretend to be. You must take care of yourself." And Nelly, though she made no reply, kissed me in her clinging way in return.

Some weeks passed after that without any particular incident. Things went on in their usual way, and though we were all sorry that Llewellyn was gone, we made no particular moan over him after the first. It was very rarely that a day passed on which I did not see the sisters; but the weather was beginning to get cold, and one Friday there was a fog which prevented me from going out. Ours is a low country, with a great many trees, and the river is not far off; and when there is a fog, it is very dreary and overwhelming. It closes in over the Green, so that you cannot see an inch before you; and the damp creeps into your very bones, though it was only the end of October, and the trees hung invisible over our heads in heavy masses, now and then dropping a faded leaf out of the fog in a ghostly, silent way: the chill went to one's heart. I had a new book, for which I was very thankful, and my fire burned brightly, and I did not stir out of doors all day. I confess it surprised me a little that the girls did not come in to me in the evening, as they had a way of doing, with their red cloaks round them, and the hoods over their heads, like Red Riding Hood. But I took it for granted they had some friends from town, or something pleasant on hand; though I had not heard any carriage driving up. As for seeing, that was impossible. Next morning, by a pleasant change, was bright, sunny, and frosty. For the first time that season, the hedges

and gardens, and even the green itself, was crisp and white with hoar-frost, which, of course, did not last, but gave us warning of winter. When I went out, I met Nelly just leaving her own door. She was in her red cloak, with her dress tucked up, and the little black hat with the red feather, which was always so becoming to her. But either it was not becoming that day, or there was something the matter with the child. I don't remember whether I have said that she had large eyes,—eyes that, when she was thinner than usual, or ill, looked out of proportion to the size of her face. They had this effect upon me that day. One did not seem to see Nelly at all; but only a big pair of wistful, soft eyes looking at one, with shadowy lines round them. I was alarmed, to tell the truth, whenever I saw her. Either something had happened, or the child was ill.

"Good-morning, my dear," I said; "I did not see you all yesterday, and it feels like a year. Were you coming to me now?"

"No," said Nelly—and even in the sound of her voice there was something changed—"it is so long since I have been in the village. I had settled to go down there this morning, and take poor Mary Jackson some warm socks we have been knitting for the babies. It is so cold to-day."

"I thought you never felt the cold," said I, as one does without thinking. "You are always as merry as a cricket in the winter weather, when we are all shivering. You know you never feel the cold."

"No," said Nelly again. "I suppose it is only the first chill"—and she gave me a strange little sick smile, and suddenly looked down and stooped to pick up something. I saw in a moment there was nothing to pick up. Could it be that there were tears in her eyes, which she wanted to hide? "But I must go now," she went on hurriedly. "Oh, no, don't think of coming with me; it is too cold, and I shall have to walk fast, I am in such a hurry. Good-by."

I could do nothing but stand and stare after her when she had gone on. What did it mean? Nelly was not given to taking fancies, or losing her temper—at least not in this way. She walked away so rapidly that she seemed to vanish out of my sight, and never once looked round or turned aside for anything. The surprise was so great that I actually forgot where I was going. It could not be for nothing that she had changed like this. I went back to my own door, and then I came out again and opened the Admiral's gate. Probably Martha was at home, and would know what was the matter. As I was going in, Martha met me coming out. She was in her red cloak, like Nelly, and she had a letter in her hand. When she saw me she laughed, and blushed a little. "Will you come with me to the post, Mrs. Mulgrave?" she said. "Sister would not wait for me; and when one has an important letter to post—" Martha went on, holding it up to me, and laughing and blushing again.

"What makes it so very important?" said I; and I confess that I tried very hard to make out the address.

"Oh, didn't she tell you?" said Martha. "What a funny girl she is! If it had been me I should have rushed all over the Green, and told everybody. It is—can't you guess?"

And she held out to me the letter in her hand. It was addressed to "Captain Llewellyn, H.M.S. *Spitfire*, Portsmouth." I looked at it, and I looked at her, and wonder took possession of me. The address was in Martha's handwriting. It was she who was going to post it; it was she who, conscious and triumphant, giggling a little and blushing a little, stood waiting for my congratulations. I looked at her aghast, and my tongue failed me. "I don't know what it means," I said, gasping. "I can't guess. Is it you who have been writing to Captain Llewellyn, or is it Nelly, or who is it? Can there have been any mistake?"

Martha was offended, as indeed she had reason to be. "There is no mistake," she said, indignantly. "It is a very strange sort of thing to say, when any friend, any acquaintance even, would have congratulated me. And you who know us so well! Captain Llewellyn has asked me to marry him—that is all. I thought you might have found out what was coming. But you have no eyes for anybody but Sister. You never think of me."

"I beg your pardon," said I, faltering; "I was so much taken by surprise. I am sure I wish you every happiness, Martha. Nobody can be more anxious for your welfare than I am—" and here I stopped short in my confusion, choked by the words, and not knowing what to say.

"Yes, I am sure of that," said Martha, affectionately, stopping at the gate to give me a kiss. "I said so to Sister this morning. I said I am sure Mrs. Mulgrave will be pleased. But are you *really* so much surprised? Did you never think this was how it was to be?"

"No," I said, trembling in spite of myself; "I never thought of it. I thought, indeed—but that makes no difference now."

"What did you think?" said Martha; and then her private sense of pride and pleasure surmounted everything else. "Well, you see it is so," she said, with a beaming smile. "He kept his own counsel, you see. I should not have thought he was so sly—should you? I daresay he thinks he showed it more than he did; for he says I must have seen how it was from the first day."

And she stood before me so beaming, so dimpling over with smiles and pleasure, that my heart sank within me. Could it be a mistake, or was it I—ah, how little it mattered for me—was it my poor Nelly who had been deceived?

"And did you?" I said, looking into her face, "did you see it from the first day?"

"Well, n-no," said Martha, hesitating; and then she resumed with a laugh, "That shows you how sly he must have been. I don't think I ever suspected such a thing; but then, to be sure, I never thought much about him, you know."

A little gleam of comfort came into my heart as she spoke. "Oh,

then," I said, relieved, "there is no occasion for congratulations after all."

"Why is there no occasion for congratulations?" said Martha. "Of course there is occasion. I wanted Sister to run in and tell you last night, but she wouldn't; and I rather wanted you to tell me what I should say, or, rather, how I should say it; but I managed it after all by myself. I suppose one always can, if one tries. It comes by nature, people say." And Martha laughed again, and blushed, and cast a proud glance on the letter she held in her hand.

"But if you never had thought of him yesterday," said I, "you can't have accepted him to-day."

"Why not?" said Martha, with a toss of her pretty head—and she was pretty, especially in that moment of excitement. I could not refuse to see it. It was a mere piece of pink and white prettiness, instead of my little nut-brown maid, with her soft eyes, and her bright varied gleams of feeling and intelligence. But then you can never calculate on what a man may think in respect to a girl. Men are such fools; I mean where women are concerned.

"Why not?" said Martha, with a laugh. "I don't mean I am frantically in love with him, you know. How could I be, when I never knew he cared for me? But I always said he was very nice; and then it is so suitable. And I don't care for anybody else. It would be very foolish of me to refuse him without any reason. Of course," said Martha, looking down upon her letter, "I shall think of him very differently now."

What could I say? I was at my wits' end. I walked on by her side to the post-office in a maze of confusion and doubt. I could have snatched the letter out of her hand, and torn it into a hundred pieces; but that would have done little good; and how could I tell if it was a mistake after all? He might have sought Nelly for her sister's sake. He might have been such a fool, such a doit, as to prefer Martha. All this time he might but have been making his advances to her covertly—under shield as it were of the gay bright creature who was too young and too simple-hearted to understand such devices. Oh, my little nut-brown maid! no wonder her eyes were so large and shadowy, her pretty cheeks so colourless! I could have cried with vexation and despair as I went along step for step with the other on the quiet country road. Though she was so far from being bright, Martha at last was struck by my silence. It took her a considerable time to find it out, for naturally her own thoughts were many, and her mind was fully pre-occupied; but she did perceive it at last.

"I don't think you seem to like it, Mrs. Mulgrave," she said; "not so much as I thought you would. You were the very first person I thought of; I was coming to tell you when I met you. And I thought you would sympathise with me and be so pleased to hear——."

"My dear," said I, "I am pleased to hear—anything that is for your happiness; but then I am so much surprised. It was not what I looked

for. And then, good heavens, if it should turn out to be some mistake——”

“Mrs. Mulgrave,” said Martha, angrily, “I don’t know what you can mean. This is the second time you have talked of a mistake. What mistake could there be? I suppose Captain Llewellyn knows what he is doing; unless you want to be unkind and cross. And what have I done that you should be so disagreeable to me?”

“Oh, my dear child!” I cried in despair, “I don’t know what I mean; I thought once—there was Major Frost, you know——”

“Oh, is it that?” said Martha, restored to perfect good-humour; “poor Major Frost! But of course if he did not choose to come forward in time, he could not expect me to wait for him. You may make your mind quite easy if that is all.”

“And then,” I said, taking a little courage, “Captain Llewellyn paid Nelly a great deal of attention. He might have thought——”

“Yes,” said Martha, “to be sure; and I never once suspected that he meant it for me all the time.”

I ask anybody who is competent to judge, could I have said any more? I walked to the post-office with her, and I saw the letter put in. And an hour afterwards I saw the mail-cart rattling past with the bags, and knew it had set out to its destination. He would get it next morning, and the two lives would be bound for ever and ever. The wrong two?—or was it only we, Nelly and I, who had made the mistake? Had it been Martha he sought all the time?

CHAPTER II.

THE news soon became known to everybody on the Green, and great surprise was excited by it. Everybody, I think, spoke to me on the subject. They said, “If it had been the other sister!” Even Lady Denzil went so far as to say this, when, after having called at the Admiral’s to offer her congratulations, she came in to see me. “I do not pretend that I like the marriage,” she said, with a little solemnity. “There were claims upon him nearer home. It is not every man that is at liberty to choose for himself; but if it had been the little one I could have understood it.” I hope nobody spoke like this to Nelly; she kept up a great deal too well to satisfy me. She was in the very centre of all the flutter that such an event makes in a small society like ours, and she knew people were watching her; but she never betrayed herself. She had lost her colour somehow—everybody remarked that; and the proud little girl got up a succession of maladies, and said she had influenza and indigestion, and I knew not what, that nobody might suspect any other cause. Sometimes I caught her for one instant off her guard, but it was a thing that happened very rarely. Two or three times I met her going off by herself for a long walk, and she would not have my company when I offered to go with her. “I walk so fast,” she said, “and then it is too

far for you." Once I even saw her in the spot to which all our walks tended—the Dingle, which was our favourite haunt. It was a glorious autumn, and the fine weather lasted long—much longer than usual. Up to the middle of November there were still masses of gorgeous foliage on the trees, and the sky was as blue—not as Italy, for Italy is soft and languorous and melting—but as an English sky without clouds, full of sunshine, yet clear, with a premonitory touch of frost, can be. The trees in the Dingle are no common trees; they are giant beeches, big-boled, heavily-clothed giants, that redder and crisp and hold their own until the latest moment; and that mount up upon heights, and descend into dollows, and open up here and there into gleams of the far plain around, growing misty in the distance as if it were sea. The great point in the landscape is a royal castle, the noblest dwelling-place I ever saw. We who live so near are learned in the different points of view; we know where to catch it shining like a fairy stronghold in the white hazy country, or stretching out in grey profile upon its height, or setting itself—here the great donjon, there a flanking tower—in frames of leafy branches. I had left my little carriage and my stout old pony on the road, and had wandered up alone to have my last peep before winter set in, when suddenly I saw Nelly before me. She was walking up and down on the soft yielding moss, carpeted with beech-mast and pine-needles; then she would stop and gaze blankly at the view,—at the great plain whitening off to the horizon, and the castle rising in the midst. I knew what the view was, but I saw also that she did not see it. Her face was all drawn together, small and shrunken up. There were deep shadowy lines round her eyes; and as for the eyes themselves, it was them and not Nelly that I saw. They were dilated, almost exaggerated, unlike anything I ever saw before. She had come out here to be alone, poor child! I crept away as best I could through the brown crackling ferns. If she heard anything; probably she thought it was some woodland creature that could not spy upon her. But I don't believe she heard anything, nor saw anything; and I was no spy upon her, dear heart!

The nearest we ever came to conversation on the subject was once when I was telling her about a girl I once knew, whose story had been a very sad one. She had pledged her heart and her life to a foolish young fellow, who was very fond of her, and then was very fond of somebody else; and would have been fond of her again, periodically, to any number of times. She had borne it as long as she could, and then she had broken down; and it had been a relief to her, poor girl, to come and cry her heart out to me.

"It has never been my way, Nelly," I said, "but it seems to ease the heart when it can speak. I don't think that I could have spoken to any one, had it been me."

"And as for me," cried Nelly, "if I should ever be like that—and if any one, even you, were so much as to look at me as if you knew, I think I should die!" "

This was before the lamp was lighted ; and in the dark, I think she put up a hand to wipe off something from her eyelash. But you may be sure I took care not to look. I tried to put all speculation out of my eyes whenever I looked at her afterwards. My poor Nelly ! in the very extravagance of her pride was there not an appeal, and piteous throwing of herself upon my forbearance ? I thought there was, and it went to my heart.

The next thing, of course, was that Llewellyn was coming to see his betrothed. He was to come at Christmas, not being able to leave his ship before. And then it was to be settled when the marriage should take place. I confess that I listened to all this with a very bad grace. Any reference to the marriage put me out of temper. He wrote to her regularly and very often, and Martha used to read his letters complacently before us all, and communicate little bits out of them, and spend half her mornings writing her replies. She was not a ready writer, and it really was hard work to her, and improved her education—at least, in the mechanical matters of writing and spelling. But I wonder what sort of rubbish it was she wrote to him, and what he thought of it. Was it possible he could suppose it was my Nelly who wrote him all those commonplaces ? or, was the mistake on my part, not on his ? As time went on, I came to think, more and more, that the latter was the case. We had been deceived, Nelly and I. And Martha and Llewellyn were two lovers worthy of each other. I fear I was not very charitable to him in my thoughts.

But I could not help being very nervous the day of his arrival. It was a bleak wintry day, Christmas Eve, but not what people call Christmas weather. It rarely is Christmas weather at Christmas. The sky hung low and leaden over our bare trees, and of course there were no cricketers now on the green, nor sound of croquet balls, to enliven the stillness. I could not rest at home. We had not been informed what train Captain Llewellyn was to come by, and my mind was in such a disturbed state, that I kept coming and going, all day long, on one errand or another, lingering about the road. I don't myself know what I meant by it ; nor could I have explained it to anybody. Sometimes I thought, if I should meet him, I would speak, and make sure. Sometimes I fancied that I could read in his face, at the first look, what it all meant. But, anyhow, I did not meet him. I thought all the trains were in, when I went to the Admiral's in the afternoon, at five o'clock—that is, all the trains that could arrive before dinner, for we were two miles from the station. Martha and her father were in the drawing-room when I entered. There was a bright fire, but the candles were not lighted ; I suppose, out of reluctance to shut up the house, and close all the windows, before the visitor came. Martha was sitting by the fire, looking very gay and bright, and a little excited. She told me Nelly had been all day in the church, helping with the decorations, and that she was to stay at the rectory for dinner, as there was a Christmas-tree for the school-children to be got ready. "I daresay she thought we should not want her this first

evening," Martha said, with a little laugh; and such was the bitterness and unreasonableness of my heart that I could have shaken her: which was nonsense, for, of course, she had a right to the society of her betrothed. While we were sitting chatting over the fire, all at once there came a sound of wheels, and the dog-cart from the little inn at Dinglefield station came rattling up. Martha gave a little cry, and ran to the drawing-room door. I know I should have gone away, but I did not. I stood behind in the ruddy gloom, and saw her rush into Llewellyn's arms. And he kissed her. And the next moment they were back in the room beside us, she chatting about his journey, and looking up in his face, and showing her satisfaction and delight, as it was quite natural she should do. It seemed to me that he did not make very much reply; but the room was dark, and his arrival was sudden, and there was a certain confusion about everything. The Admiral came forward, and shook hands with him, and so did I, and instead of looking as if he wished us a hundred miles off, Llewellyn kept peering into the corners, as if he wanted another greeting. Then he came to the fire, and stood before it, making the room all the darker with his shadow; and after we had all asked him if he had felt the cold on his journey, there did not seem very much to say. I don't know how the others felt, but I know my heart began to beat wildly. Martha was in an unnatural state of excitement. She drew a great comfortable easy-chair to the fire for him. "Dear Ellis, sit down," she said, laying her hand softly on his arm. The touch seemed to wake him up out of a kind of reverie. He took her hand, and held it for a moment, and then let it fall.

"You are far too kind," he said, "to take so much trouble for me. A thousand thanks. Where is—your sister? She knew I was to come by this train."

"No, I don't think Sister knew," said Martha; "that was my little secret. I would not tell them what train you were coming by. She is helping with the church decorations. She will see you to-morrow, you knew. I wish they would bring the tea: papa, will you ring?—Oh, papa has gone away. Wait a minute, Ellis dear, and I will run and make them bring it immediately. It will warm you better than anything else. I shan't be a moment gone."

The moment she had left us poor Llewellyn turned to me. Notwithstanding the ruddy firelight, I could see he was quite haggard with the awful suspicion that must have flashed upon him. "Mrs. Mulgrave!" he cried hurriedly, holding out his hands, "for God's sake, tell me, what does this mean?"

"It means that you have come to see your betrothed, Captain Llewellyn," said I; "she has just gone out of the room. You made your choice, and I hope you did not expect to have both the sisters. Martha stayed to receive you, as was right and natural. You could not expect the same from Nelly. She thought neither of you would want a third to-night."

I was so angry that I said all this in a breath. I know I ought to be ashamed of myself, but I did it ; I don't think, however, that he heard half. He covered his face with his hands, and gave a groan, which seemed to me to echo all through the house ; and I had to add on to what I was saying, "Oh, for heaven's sake, restrain yourself," I cried, without even taking breath, "now it is too late !"

And then Martha came in, excited and joyous, half dancing with high spirits. I could have groaned too, and hid my face from the light, as he did, poor fellow ; but she went up to him, and drew down his hands playfully, and said, "I am here, Ellis, you needn't cover your eyes." He did not answer her with a compliment or a caress, as perhaps she expected : and Martha looked at me where I was standing by the side of the fire. I knew she thought I was the restraining influence that closed his mouth and subdued his joy—and what could I do ?—I went away : I could be of no use to him, poor boy. He must face it now as best he could. I went away, and as soon as I got safely into my own house, sat down and cried. Not that crying would do any good ; but when everything is going wrong, and everybody is on the way to ruin, and you see how it is, and know how to mend it, and yet cannot, dare not, put forth a hand, what can any one do, but sit down and cry ?

But I could not rest in my quiet, comfortable, lonely house, and know that those poor young hearts were being wrung, and keep quiet and take no notice. I had my cup of tea, and I put on my warm cloak and hood, and went across the green, though it was wet and slippery, to the school-room, where I knew Nelly would be. She was in the midst of a heap of toys and paper flags and little tapers, dressing up the Christmas tree. There were three or four girls altogether, and Nelly was the busiest of all. Her little hands were pricked and scratched with the points of the holly, and the sharp needles of the little fir-tree on which she was working. Poor child, I wish it had been her hands only that were wounded. The others had gloves on, but Nelly had taken hers off, either because she found the pain of the pricks good for her, or because of some emblematical meaning in it. "I can't work in gloves," she said carelessly, "and it don't hurt so much when you are used to it." When I saw her I could not but think of the pictures of Indians tied to the stake, with arrows flying at them from all quarters. I am aware St. Sebastian was killed in the same way, —but I did not think of him.

"I wish you would come with me, Nelly," I said ; "you know Christmas Eve is never very merry to me. There is no dinner, but you shall have something with your tea."

"I am going to the factory," said Nelly. She did not venture to look at me, and she spoke very quick, with a kind of catch in her breath. "I promised,—and there is a great deal to do yet. When Christmas is not merry, it is best to try and forget it is Christmas. If I were to go with you, you would talk to me, and that would make you feel everything the more."

"I would not talk,—you may trust me, Nelly," I said eagerly. In my excitement I was for one minute off my guard.

She gave me one look, and then turned away, and began arranging the flags, and pricking her poor little soft fingers. "Talking does not matter to me," she said in her careless way. Her pride was something that filled me with consternation. She would not yield, not if she had been cut in little pieces. Her heart was being torn out of her very breast, and she was ready to look her executioners in the face, and cheer them on.

I don't know how they all got through that evening. Nelly, I know, went home late, and went to her own room at once, as being tired. It was poor Llewellyn that was the most to be pitied. I could not get him out of my mind. I sat, and thought and thought over it, till I could scarcely rest. Would he have the courage to emancipate himself and tell the truth? or would the dreadful coil of circumstances in which he had got involved, overcome him and subdue his spirit? I asked myself this question till it made me sick and faint. How was he to turn upon the girl who was hanging on him so proud and pleased and confident, and say that he had never cared for her, and never sought her? There are men who would have the nerve to do that; but my poor simple tender-hearted sailor—who would not hurt a fly, and who had no warning nor preparation for the fate that was coming on him—I could not hope that he would be so brave.

I saw by my first glance next morning at church, that he had not been brave. He was seated by Martha's side, looking pale, and haggard, and stern; such a contrast to her lively and demonstrative happiness. Nelly was at the other end of the pew, under her father's shadow. I don't know what she had done to herself,—either it was excitement, or in her pride she had had recourse to artificial aids. She had recovered her colour as if by a miracle. I am afraid that I did not pay so much attention to the service as I ought to have done. My whole thoughts were bent upon the Admiral's seat, where there were two people quite serene and comfortable, and two in the depths of misery and despair. There were moments when I felt as if I could have got up in church and protested against it in the sight of God. One feels as if one could do that: but one keeps still, and does nothing all the same.

In the afternoon, Llewellyn came to see me. He would have done it anyhow, I feel sure, for he had a good heart. But there was a stronger reason still that Christmas Day. He did not say much to me when he came. He walked about my drawing-room, and looked at all the ornaments on the tables, and opened the books, and examined my Christmas presents. Then he came and sat down beside me before the fire. He tried to talk, and then he broke off, and leant his face between his hands. It was again a grey, dark, sunless day; and it was all the darker in my room because of the verandah over the windows, which made it so pleasant in summer. I could see his profile darkly before me as he made an attempt at conversation, not looking at me, but staring into the fire; and

then, all at once, his shoulders went up, and his face disappeared in the shadow of his hands. He stared into the fire, still under that shelter ; but he felt himself safe from my inspection, poor fellow.

"I ought to beg your pardon," he said, suddenly concentrating all his attention upon the glowing embers, "for speaking as I did—last night——"

"There was nothing to pardon," said I. And then we came to an embarrassed pause, for I did not know which was best—to speak, or to be silent.

"I know I was very abrupt," he said. "I was rude. I hope you will forgive me. It was the surprise." And then he gave vent to something between a cry and a groan. "What is to become of us all, good God!" he muttered. It was all I could do to hear him, and the exclamation did not sound to me profane.

"Captain Llewellyn," I said, "I don't know whether I ought to say anything, or whether I should hold my tongue. I understand it all ; and I feel for you with all my heart."

"It doesn't matter," he said ; "it doesn't matter. Feeling is of no use. But there is one thing you could tell me. She—you know—I can't call her by any name—I don't seem to know her name :—Just tell me one thing, and I'll try and bear it. Did she mind ? Does she think me—— ? Good heavens ! what does it matter what any one thinks ? If you are sure it did not hurt her, I—don't mind."

"N—no," said I ; but I don't think he got any comfort from my tone. "You may be sure it will not hurt her," I went on, summoning up all my pride. "She is not the sort of girl to let it hurt her." I spoke indignantly, for I did not know what was coming. He seized my hand, poor boy, and wrung it till I could have screamed ; and then he broke down, as a man does when he has come to the last point of wretchedness : two or three hoarse sobs burst from him. "God bless her !" he cried.

I was wound up to such a pitch that I could not sit still. I got up and grasped his shoulder. In my excitement, I did not know what I was doing.

"Are you going to bear it ?" I said. "Do you mean to let it go on ? It is a lie ; and are you going to set it up for the truth ? Oh, Captain Llewellyn ! is it possible that you mean to let it go on ?"

Then he gave me one sorrowful look, and shook his head. "I have accepted it," he said. "It is too late. You said so last night."

I knew I had said so ; but things somehow looked different now. "I would speak to Martha herself," said I. And I saw he shuddered at her name. "I would speak to her father. The Admiral is sensible and kind. He will know what to do."

"He will think I mean to insult them," said Llewellyn, shaking his head. "I have done harm enough. How was I to know ? But never mind—never mind : It is my own doing, and I must bear it." Then he

rose up suddenly, and turned to me with a wan kind of smile. "I cannot afford to indulge myself with talk," he said. "Good-by, and thanks. I don't feel as if I cared much now what happened. The only thing is, I can't stay here."

"But you must stay a week—you must stay over Christmas," I cried, as he stood holding my hand.

"Yes," he said, with a sigh. "I must get through to-night. If you'd keep her out of the way, Mrs. Mulgrave, it would be the kindest thing you could do. I can't look at her. It kills me. But I'll be summoned by telegram to-morrow," he added, with a kind of desperate satisfaction. "I wrote this morning." And then he shook hands with me hurriedly, and went away.

I had very little trouble to keep Nelly—poor Nelly!—out of his way. She made me go upstairs with her, after dinner (I always dined there on Christmas), to show me the presents she had got, and the things she had prepared for her pensioners in the village. We made a great pet of the village, we people who lived on the green, and, I fear, rather spoilt it. There were things for the babies, and things for the old women, which were to be bestowed next day when they all came to the schoolroom for the Christmas-tree. She never mentioned Llewellyn to me, nor Martha, nor referred to the domestic event which, in other circumstances, would have occupied her mind above all. I almost wonder it did not occur to her that to speak of, and show an interest in, her sister's engagement was a quite necessary part of her own self-defence. Either it was too much, and she could not, or it did not enter into her mind. She never took any notice of it, at least to me. She never so much as mentioned his name. They never looked at each other, nor addressed each other, though I could see that every look and movement of one was visible to the other. Nelly kept me upstairs until it was time for me to go home. She came running out with me, with her red cloak round her, when the Admiral marched to the gate to see me home, as he made a rule of doing. She stood at the gate, in the foggy, wintry darkness, to wait for him until he came back from my door. And I waited on my own threshold, and saw them going back—Nelly, poor child, clinging fast to her father's arm. My heart ached; and yet not so much even for her as for the other. What was he doing indoors, left alone with the girl he was engaged to, and did not love?

Next morning, to the astonishment and dismay of everybody but myself, Captain Llewellyn was summoned back to his ship by telegraph. Martha was more excited about it than I should have supposed possible. It was so hard upon poor dear Ellis, she said, before they had been able to arrange anything, or even to talk of anything. She had not the slightest doubt of him. His wretched looks, and his hesitation and coldness, had taught nothing to Martha. If she was, perhaps, disappointed at first by his want of ardour, the disappointment had soon passed. It was his way; he was not the sort of man to make a fuss. By this means she quite

accounted for it to herself. For my own part, I cannot say that I was satisfied with his conduct. If he had put a stop to it boldly—if he had said at once it was all a mistake—then, whatever had come of it, I could have supported and sympathised with him; but it made an end of Captain Llewellyn, as a man, in my estimation when he thus ran away. I was vexed, and I was sorry; and yet I cannot say I was surprised.

He wrote afterwards to say it was important business, and that he had no hope of being able to come back. And then he wrote that he had been transferred to another ship just put into commission, and had to sail at once. He could not even come to wish his betrothed good-by. He assured her it could not be for long, as their orders were only for the Mediterranean; but it was a curious reversal of all their former ideas. "He must retire," Martha said, when she had told me this news with tears. "The idea of a man with a good property of his own being ordered about like this! Papa says things have changed since his days; he never heard of anything so arbitrary. After all he said about our marriage taking place first, to think that he shall have to go away now, without a moment to say good-by!"

And she cried and dried her eyes, while I sat by and felt myself a conspirator, and was very uncomfortable. Nelly was present too. She sat working in the window, with her head turned away from us, and took no part in the conversation. Perhaps it was a relief; perhaps—and this was what she herself thought—it would have been better to have got it over at once. Anyhow, at this present juncture, she sat apart, and took no apparent notice of what we said.

"And Nelly never says a word," sobbed Martha. "She has no sympathy. I think she hates poor dear Ellis. She scarcely looked at him when he was here. And she won't say she is sorry now."

"When everybody is sorry, what does it matter if I say it or not?" said Nelly, casting one rapid glance from her work. She never was so fond of her work before. Now, she had become all at once a model girl: she never was idle for a moment; one kind of occupation or another was constantly in her hands. She sat at her knitting, while Martha, disappointed and vexed, cried and folded up her letter. I don't know whether an inkling of the truth had come to Nelly's mind. Sometimes I thought so. When the time approached which Llewellyn had indicated as the probable period of his return, she herself proposed that she should go on a visit to her godmother, in Devonshire. It was spring then, and she had a cough; and there were very good reasons why she should go. The only one that opposed it was Martha. "It will look so unkind to dear Ellis," she said; "as if you would rather not meet him. At Christmas you were out all the time. And if she dislikes him, Mrs. Mulgrave, she ought to try to get over it. Don't you think so? It is unkind to go away."

"She does not dislike him," said I. "But she wants a change, my dear." And so we all said. The Admiral, good man, did not understand it at all. He saw that something was wrong. "There is something on

the little one's mind," he said to me. "I hoped she would have taken you into her confidence. I can't tell what is wrong with her, for my part."

"She wants a change," said I. "She has never said anything to me."

It was quite true; she had never said a word to me. I might have betrayed Llewellyn, but I could not betray Nelly. She had kept her own counsel. While the Admiral was talking to me, I cannot describe how strong the temptation was upon me to tell him all the story. But I dared not. It was a thing from which the boldest might have shrunk. And though everybody on the Green had begun to wonder vaguely, and the Admiral himself was a little uneasy, Martha never suspected anything amiss. She cried a little when "poor Ellis" wrote to say his return was again postponed; but it was for his disappointment she cried. Half-an-hour after she was quite serene and cheerful again, looking forward to the time when he should arrive eventually. "For he must come some time, you know; they can't keep him away for ever," she said; until one did not know whether to be impatient with her serenity, or touched by it, and would not make up one's mind whether it was stupidity or faith.

CHAPTER III.

NELLY paid her visit to her godmother, and came back; and spring wore into summer, and the trees were all in full foliage again in the Dingle, and the cricketers had returned to the Green; but still Captain Llewellyn was unaccountably detained. Nelly had come home looking much better than when she went away. His name still disturbed her composure I could see; though I don't suppose a stranger who knew nothing of the circumstances would have found it out. And when Martha threatened us with a visit from him, her sister shrank up into herself; but otherwise Nelly was much improved. She recovered her cheerful ways; she became the soul of all our friendly parties again. I said to myself that I had been a truer prophet than I had the least hope of; and that she was not the sort of girl to let herself be crushed in any such way. But she never spoke to me of her sister's marriage, nor of her sister's betrothed. I mentioned the matter one day when we were alone, cruelly and of set purpose to see what she would say. "When your sister is married, and when you are married," I said, "it will be very dull both for the Admiral and me."

"I shall never marry," said Nelly, with a sudden closing up and veiling of all her brightness which was more expressive than words. "I don't know about Sister; but you need not weave any such visions for me."

"All girls say so till their time comes," said I, with an attempt to be playful; "but why do you say you don't know about Martha? she must be married before long, of course?"

"I suppose so," said Nelly, and then she stopped short; she would not add another word; but afterwards, when we were all together, she

broke out suddenly. Martha's conversation at this period was very much occupied with her marriage. I suppose it was quite natural. In my young days girls were shy of talking much on that subject, but things are changed now. Martha talked of it continually : of when dear Ellis could come ; of his probable desire that the wedding should take place at once ; of her determination to have two months at least to prepare her trousseau ; of where they would go after the marriage. She discussed everything, without the smallest idea, poor girl, of what was passing in the minds of the listeners. At last, after hearing a great deal of this for a long time, Nelly suddenly burst forth,—

“ How strange it would be after all, if we were to turn out a couple of old maids,” she cried, “ and never to marry at all. The two old sisters ! with chairs on each side of the fire, and great authorities in the village. How droll it would be !— and not so very unlikely after all.”

“ Speak for yourself,” cried Martha, indignantly. “ It is very unlikely so far as I am concerned. I am as good as married already. As for you, you can do what you please—— ”

“ Yes, I can do what I please,” said Nelly, with a curious ring in her voice ; and then she added, “ But I should not wonder if we were both old maids after all.”

“ She is very queer,” Martha said to me when her sister had left the room, in an aggrieved tone. “ She does not mean it, of course ; but I don't like it, Mrs. Mulgrave. It does not seem lucky. Why should she take it into her head about our being old maids ? I am as good as married now.”

“ Yes,” I said, vaguely. I could not give any assent more cordial. And then she resumed her anticipations. But I saw in a moment what Nelly meant. This was how she thought it was to end. It was a romantic girl's notion, but happily she was too young to think how unlikely it was. No doubt she saw a vision of the two maiden sisters, and of one who would be their devoted friend, but who could never marry either. That was the explanation she had put in her heart upon his abrupt departure and his many delays. He had made a fatal mistake, and its consequences were to last all his life. They were all three, all their lives long, to continue in the same mind. He could never marry either of them ; and neither of them, none of the three, were ever to be tempted to marry another. And thus, in a pathetic climax of faithfulness and delicate self-sacrifice, they were to grow old and die. Nelly was no longer miserable when she had framed this ideal in her mind. It seemed to her the most natural solution of the difficulty. The romance, instead of ending in a prosaic marriage, was to last all their lives. And the eldest of them, Llewellyn himself, was but seven-and-twenty ! Poor Nelly thought it the most likely thing in the world.

If she had consulted me, I could have told her of something much more likely—something which very soon dawned upon the minds of most people at Dinglefield Green. It was that a certain regiment had come

back to the barracks which were not very far from our neighbourhood. Before Captain Llewellyn made his appearance among us, there had been a Major Frost who "paid attention" to Martha; and he did not seem at all disinclined to pay attention to her now that he had come back. Though he was told of her engagement, the information seemed to have very little effect upon him. He came over perpetually, and was always at hand to ride or walk, or drive, or flirt, as the young ladies felt disposed. Before he had been back a fortnight it seemed to me that Martha had begun to talk less about dear Ellis. By degrees she came the length of confessing that dear Ellis wrote very seldom. I had found out that fact for myself, but she had never made any reference to it before. I watched her with an interest which surpassed every other interest in my life at that moment. I forgot even Nelly, and took no notice of her in comparison. The elder sister absorbed me altogether. By degrees she gave up talking of her marriage, and of her wedding-dress, and where they were to live; and she began to talk of Major Frost. He seemed always to be telling her something which she had to repeat; and he told her very private details, with which she could have nothing to do. He told her that he was much better off than when he was last at the Green. Somebody had died and had left him a great deal of money. He was thinking of leaving the army, and buying a place in our county, if possible. He asked Martha's advice where he should go. "It is odd that he should tell you all this," I said to her one day, when she was re-confiding to me a great many of Major Frost's personal affairs; and though she was not usually very quick of apprehension, something called upon Martha's check the shadow of a blush.

"I think it is quite natural," she said; "we are such old friends; and then he knows I am engaged. I always thought he was very nice—didn't you? I don't think he will ever marry," Martha added, with a certain pathos. "He says he could never have married but one woman; and he can't have her now. He was poor when he was last here, you know."

"And who was the woman he could have married?" said I.

"Oh, of course I did not ask him," said Martha, with modest consciousness. "Poor fellow! it would have been cruel to ask him. It is hard that he should have got his money just after I—I mean after she was engaged."

"It is hard that money should always be at the bottom of everything," said I. And though it was the wish nearest to my heart that Martha should forget and give up Llewellyn, still I was angry with her for what she said. But that made no difference. She went on walking and talking with Major Frost, and boring us all with him and his confidences, till I, for one, was sick of his very name. But she meant no treachery; she never even thought of deserting her betrothed. Had any accident happened to bring him uppermost, she would have gone back to dear Ellis all the same. She was not faithless nor fickle, nor anything that was wished: she was

chiefly stupid, or rather, stolid. And to think the two were sisters! The Admiral was not very quick-sighted, but evidently he had begun to notice how things were going. He came to me one afternoon to consult me when both the girls were out. I suppose they were at croquet somewhere. We elders found that afternoon hour, when they were busy with the balls and mallets, a very handy time for consulting about anything which they were not intended to know.

"I think I ought to write to Llewellyn," he said. "Things are in a very unsatisfactory state. I am not satisfied that he was obliged to go away as he said. I think he might have come to see her had he tried. I have been consulting the little one about it, and she thinks with me."

"What does she think?" I asked, with breathless interest, to the Admiral's surprise.

"She thinks with me, that things are in an unsatisfactory state," he said, calmly; "that it would be far better to have it settled and over, one way or another. She is a very sensible little woman. I was just about to write to Llewellyn; but I thought it best to ask you first, what your opinion was."

Should I speak and tell him all? Had I any right to tell him? The thought passed through my mind quick as lightning. I made a longer pause than I ought to have done. And then all I could find to say was,—

"I think I should let things take their chance if I were you."

"What does that mean?" said the Admiral, quickly. "Take their chance! I think it is my duty to write to him, and let things be settled out of hand."

It was with this intention he left me. But he did not write; for the very next morning there came a letter from Llewellyn, not to Martha, but to her father, telling him that he was coming home. The ship had been paid off quite unexpectedly, I heard afterwards. And I suppose that, unless he had been courageous enough to give the true explanation of his conduct, he had no resource but to come back. It was a curious, abrupt sort of letter. The young man's conscience, I think, had pricked him for his cowardice in running away; and either he had wound himself up to the point of carrying out his engagement in desperation, or else he was coming to tell his story, and ask for his release. I heard of it immediately from the Admiral himself, who was evidently not quite at ease in his mind on the subject. And a short time afterwards Martha came in, dragging her sister with her, full of the news.

"I could scarcely get her to come," Martha said. "I can't think what she always wants running after those village people. And when we have just got the news that Ellis is coming home!"

"Yes, I heard," said I. "I suppose I ought to congratulate you. Do you expect him soon? Does he say anything about——?"

"Oh, his letter was to papa," said Martha, interrupting my very hesitating and embarrassed speech; for my eyes were on Nelly, and I saw in a moment that her whole expression had changed. "He could not be

expected to say anything particular to papa ; but I suppose it must be very soon. I don't think he will want to wait now he is free."

" I shall be very glad when it is all over," said Nelly, to my great surprise. It was the first time I had heard her make any comment on the subject. " It will make so much fuss and worry. It is very entertaining to them, I suppose, but it is rather tiresome to us. Mrs. Mulgrave, I am going to see Molly Jackson ; I can hear all about the trousseau at home, you know."

" Nelly ! " said I, as I kissed her ; and I could not restrain a warning look. She flushed up, poor child, to her hair, but turned away with a sick impatience that went to my heart.

" If you had the worry of it night and day, as I shall have ! " she said, under her breath, with an impatient sigh. And then she went away.

I knew all that was in her mind, as well as if she had told me. She had lost her temper and patience as well as her peace of mind. It is hard to keep serene under a repeated pressure. She did it the first time ; but she was not equal to it the second. She had no excuse to go away now. She had to look forward to everything, and hear it all discussed, and go through in anticipation. She had to receive him as his future sister ; to be the witness of everything, always on the spot ; a part of the bridal pageant, the first and closest spectator. And it was very hard to bear. As for Martha, she sat serene in a chair which she had herself worked for me, turning her fair countenance to the light. She saw nothing strange in Nelly's temper, nor in anything that happened to her. She sat waiting till I had taken my seat again, quite ready to go into the question of the trousseau. The sight of her placidity made me desperate. Suddenly there came before me the haggard looks of poor Llewellyn, and the pale exasperation and heart-sickness of my bright little Nelly's face. And then I looked at Martha, who was sitting, serene and cheerful, just in the same spot and the same attitude in which, a few days before, she had told me of Major Frost. She had left off Major Frost now, and come back to her trousseau. What did it matter to her which of them it was ! As for giving her pain, or humiliating her, how much or how long would she feel it ? I became desperate. I fastened the door when I closed it after Nelly, that nobody might interrupt us ; and then I came and sat down opposite to my victim. Martha was utterly unconscious still. It never occurred to her to notice how people were looking, nor to guess what was in anybody's mind.

" You are quite pleased," said I, making my first assault very gently, " that Captain Llewellyn is coming home ? "

" Pleased ! " said Martha. " Of course I am pleased. What odd people you all are ! Anybody might see that it is pleasanter to be settled, and know what one is doing. I wish you would come up to town with me some day, Mrs. Mulgrave, and help me with Elise."

" My dear," said I, " in the first place, there is something more important than Elise ; there is Major Frost. What do you mean to do with him ? "

"I?" said Martha, opening her eyes. "He always knew I was engaged. Of course I am very sorry for him; but if he did not choose to come forward in time, he could not expect that one was to wait."

"And is that how you mean to leave him," said I, severely, "after all the encouragement you have given him? Every day, for a month past, I have expected to hear you say that you had made a mistake about Captain Llewellyn, and that it was the Major you liked best."

"Oh, fancy *me* doing such a thing!" cried Martha, really roused, "after being engaged to Ellis a whole year. If he had come forward at the proper time, perhaps—— But to make a change when everything was settled. You never could have believed it of *me*!"

"If you like the other better, it is never too late to make a change," said I, carried away by my motive, which was good, and justified a little stretch of ethics. "You will be doing a dreadful injury to poor Captain Llewellyn if you marry him, and like another man best."

Martha looked at me with a little simper of self-satisfaction. "I think I know my duty," she said. "I am engaged. I don't see that anything else is of any consequence. Of course the gentleman I am engaged to is the one I shall like best."

"Do you mean that you are engaged to him because you like him best?" said I. "Martha, take care. You may be preparing great bitterness for yourself. I have no motive but your good." This was not true, but still it is a thing that everybody says; and I was so much excited that I had to stop to take breath. "You may never have it in your power to make a choice again," I said, with solemnity. "You ought to pause and think seriously which of the two you love. You cannot love them both. It is the most serious question you will ever have to settle in your life."

Martha looked at me with a calm surprise which drove me wild. "Dear Mrs. Mulgrave," she said, "I don't know what you mean. I am engaged to Ellis—and Major Frost has never proposed even. He may have been only flirting, for anything I can tell; and how foolish it would be to give up the one without any real hold on the other! but of course it is nonsense altogether. Why, Ellis is coming back on purpose; and as Major Frost did not come forward in time, I don't see how he can complain."

All this she said with the most perfect placidity, sitting opposite the window, lifting her serene countenance to the light. It was a practical concern to Martha. It did not so much matter which it was; but to interfere with a thing fully arranged and settled, because of any mere question of liking! I was not by a very long way so cool as she was. Everything seemed to me to depend upon this last throw, and I felt myself suddenly bold to put it to the touch. It was not my business, to be sure; but to think of those two young creatures torn asunder and made miserable! It was not even Nelly I was thinking of. Nelly would be free; she was young; she would not have her heartbreak always kept

before her, and time would heal her wounds. But poor Llewellyn was bound and fettered. He could not escape nor forget. It was for him I made my last attempt.

"Martha, I have something still more serious to say to you," I said. "Do you remember, when you told me of Captain Llewellyn's proposal first, I asked you if it was not a mistake?"

"Yes, I remember very well," said Martha. "It was just like you. I never knew any one who asked such odd questions. I should have been angry had it been any one but you."

"Perhaps you will be angry now," I said. "I know you will be vexed, but I can't help it. Oh, my dear, you must listen to me! It is not only your happiness that is concerned, but that of others. Martha, I have every reason to think that it was a mistake. Don't smile; I am in earnest. It was a mistake. Can't you see yourself how little heart he puts into it? Martha, my dear, it is no slight to you. You told me you had never thought of him before he wrote to you. And it was not you he meant to write to. What can I say to convince you? It is true; it is not merely my idea. It was all a mistake."

"Mrs. Mulgrave," said Martha, a little moved out of her composure, "I am not angry. I might be; but I am sure you don't mean it. It is one of the fancies you take into your head. How could it be a mistake? It was me he wrote to, not anybody else. Of course I was not fond of him before; but when a man asks you to marry him, how is it possible there can be any mistake?"

"Oh, Martha," I said, wringing my hands, "let me tell you all; only hear me, and don't be vexed. Did you never notice all that summer how he followed Nelly about? Try and remember. He was always by her side; wherever we went those two were together. Ask anybody; ask Lady Denzil; ask your father. Oh, my dear child, I don't want to hurt your feelings! I want to save you from something you will be very sorry for. I want you to be happy. Can't you see what I mean without any more explanations from me?"

Martha had, notwithstanding her composure, grown pale. Her placid looks had changed a little. "I see it is something about Sister," she said. "Because you like her best, you think everybody else must like her best too. I wonder why it is that you are so unkind to me!"

As she spoke, she cried a little, and turned her shoulder towards me, instead of her face.

"Not unkind," I said, "oh, not unkind! I am speaking only because I love you all."

"You have never loved me," said Martha, weeping freely; "never, though I have been so fond of you. And now you want to make me ridiculous and miserable. How can I tell what you mean? What has Sister to do with it? Ellis was civil to her for—*for my sake*. It was me he proposed to. How can I tell what you are all plotting in your hearts?"

When people write letters to me, and ask me to marry them, am I not to believe what they say?"

"When he wrote, he thought Nelly was the eldest," I said. "You know what I have always told you about your names. He wrote to her, and it came to you. Martha, believe me, it is not one of my fancies; it is true."

"How do you know it is true?" she cried, with a natural outburst of anger and indignation. "How do you dare to come and say all this now? Insulting Ellis, and Sister, and me. Oh, I wish I had never known you! I wish I had never, never, come into this house! I wish——"

Her voice died away in a storm of sobs and tears. She cried like a child—as a baby cries, violently, with temper, and not with grief. She was not capable of Nelly's suppressed passion and misery; neither did the blow strike deep enough for that; and she had no pride to restrain her. She cried noisily, turning her shoulder to me, making her eyes red and her cheeks blurred. When I got up and went to her, she repulsed me; I had nothing to do but sit down again, and wait till the passion had worn itself out. And there she sat sobbing, crushing her pretty hat, and disfiguring her pretty face, with the bright light falling upon her, and revealing every heave of her shoulders. By degrees the paroxysm subsided; she dried her eyes, poor child, and put up her hair, which had got into disorder, with hasty and agitated hands. Then she turned her flushed tear-stained face upon me. It was almost prettier than usual in this childish passion.

"I don't believe you," she cried. "I don't believe it one bit! You only want to vex me. Oh, I wish I had never known you. I wish I might never see you again,—you, and—all the rest! I wish I was dead! But I shall tell papa, Mrs. Mulgrave, and I know what he will think of you."

"Martha, I am very sorry—" I began, but Martha had rushed to the door.

"I don't want to hear any more!" she said. "I know everything you can say. You are fond of Sister, and want her to have everything. And you always hated me!"

With these words she rushed out, shutting not only the door of the room behind her in her wrath, but the door of the house, which stood always open. She left me, I avow, in a state of very great agitation. I had not expected her to take it in this way. And it had been a great strain upon my nerves to speak at all. I trembled all over, and as soon as she was gone I cried too, from mere nervousness and agitation, not to speak of the terrible thought that weighed on my mind—had I done harm or good? What would the others say if they knew? Would they bless or curse me? Had I interfered out of season? Had I been officious? Heaven knows! The result only could show.

Most people know what a strange feeling it is when one has thus estranged, or parted in anger from, a daily and intimate companion; how

one sits in a vague fever of excitement, thinking it over—wondering what else one could have said; wondering if the offended friend will come or send, or give any sign of reconciliation; wondering what one ought to do. I was so shaken by it altogether that I was good for nothing but lying down on the sofa. When my maid came to look for me, she was utterly dismayed by my appearance. "Them young ladies are too much for you, ma'am," she said, indignantly. "It's as bad as daughters of your own." I think that little speech was the last touch that was wanted to make me break down. As bad as daughters of my own, but not as good; very different. When I thought how those girls would cling round their father, it was more than I could bear. Not that I envied him. But I was ready to do more for them than he was; to risk their very love, in order to serve them; and how different was their affection for me.

All day long I stayed indoors, recovering slowly, but feeling very miserable. Nobody came near me. The girls, who were generally flitting out and in twenty times in a day, never appeared again. The very door which Martha shut in her passion remained closed all day. When it came to be evening, I could bear it no longer; I could not let the sun go down upon such a quarrel; I was so lonely I could not afford to be proud. I drew my shawl round me, though I was still trembling, and went softly in at the Admiral's gate. It was dusk, and everything was very sweet. It had been a lovely autumn day, very warm for the season, and the twilight lingered as if it was loth to make an end of it. I thought the girls would probably be in the drawing-room by themselves, and that I might invent some excuse for sending Nelly away, and try to make my peace with her sister. I did not love Martha as I loved Nelly, but I was fond of her all the same, as one is fond of a girl one has seen grow up, and watched over every day; and I could not bear that she should be estranged from me. When I went in, however, Nelly was all alone in the drawing-room. She was sitting in a low chair by the fire, for they always had a fire earlier than other people. She was sitting over it, with her face resting in her hands, almost crouching towards the friendly blaze. And yet it was a warm evening, very warm for the time of the year. She started when she heard my step, and turned round, and for the moment I saw that I was not welcome to Nelly either. Her thoughts had been better company, or was it possible that Martha could have told her? I did not think, however, that this could be the case, when she drew forward my favourite chair for me, and we began to talk. Nelly had not passed through any crisis such as that which Martha and I had made for ourselves. She told me her sister had a headache, and had been lying down before dinner, but that now she had gone out for a little air.

"Only in the garden," Nelly said. And then she added, "Major Frost is here. He is with her—and I don't think he ought to come so often—now—"

"Major Frost!" I said, and my heart began to beat; I don't know what I feared or hoped, for at this moment the Admiral came in from

the dining-room, and joined us, and we got into ordinary conversation. What a strange thing ordinary conversation is! We sat in the dark, with only the firelight making rosy gleams about the room, and wavering in the great mirror over the mantelpiece, where we were all dimly reflected—and talked about every sort of indifferent subject. But I wonder if Nelly was thinking of what she was saying? or if her heart was away, like mine, hovering over the heads of these two in the garden, or with poor Llewellyn who was creeping home an unwilling bridegroom? Even the Admiral, I believe, had something on his mind different from all our chit-chat. For my own part I sat well back in my corner, with my heart thumping so against my breast that it affected my breathing. I had to speak in gasps, making up the shortest sentences I could think of. And we talked about public affairs, and what was likely to be the result of the new measures; and the Admiral, who was a man of the old school, shook his head, and declared I was a great deal too much of an optimist, and thought more hopefully than reasonably of the national affairs. Heaven help me! I was thinking of nothing at that moment but of Martha and Major Frost.

Then there was a little stir outside in the hall. The firelight, and the darkness, and the suspense, and my own feelings generally, recalled to my mind so strongly the evening on which Llewellyn arrived, that I should not have been surprised had he walked in when the door opened. But it was only Martha who came in. The firelight caught her as she entered, and showed me for one brief moment a different creature from the Martha I had parted with that morning in sobs and storms. I don't know what she wore; but I know that she was more elaborately dressed than usual, and had sparkling ornaments about her, which caught the light. I almost think, though I never could be sure, that it was her poor mother's diamond brooch which she had put on, though they were alone. She came in lightly, with something of the triumphant air I had noticed in her a year ago, before Captain Llewellyn's Christmas visit. It was evident, at all events, that my remonstrance had not broken her spirit. I could see her give a little glance to my corner, and I know that she saw I was there.

"Are you here, papa?" she said. "You always sit, like crows, in the dark, and nobody can see you." Then she drew a chair into the circle. She took no notice of me or any one, but placed herself directly in the light of the fire.

"Yes, my dear," said her father. "I am glad you have come in. It begins to get cold."

"We did not feel it cold," said Martha, and then she laughed,—a short little disconnected laugh, which indicated some disturbance of her calm; then she went on, with a tendency to short and broken sentences, like myself. "Papa," she said, "I may as well tell you at once. When the Major was here last, he was poor, and could not speak,—now he's well off. And he wants me to marry him. I like him better than—Ellis Llewellyn. I always,—liked him better,—and he loves me!"

Upon which Martha burst into tears.

If I were to try to describe the consternation produced by this unlooked-for speech, I should only prolong my story without making it more clear. The want of light heightened it, and confused us all doubly. If a bomb had burst in the peaceful place I don't think it could have produced a greater commotion. It was only the Admiral, however, who could say a word, and of course he was the proper person. Martha very soon came out of her tears to reply to him. He was angry, he was bewildered, he was wild for the moment. What was he to say to Llewellyn? What did she mean? How did Major Frost dare—? I confess that I was crying in my corner,—I could not help it. When the Admiral began to storm, I put my hand on his arm, and made him come to me, and whispered a word in his ear. Then the good man subsided into a bewildered silence. And after a while he went to the library, where Major Frost was waiting to know his fate.

It is unnecessary to follow out the story further. Llewellyn, poor fellow, had to wait a long time after all before Nelly would look at him. I never knew such a proud little creature. And she never would own to me that any spark of human feeling had been in her during that painful year. They were a proud family altogether. Martha met me ever after with her old affectionateness and composure,—never asked pardon, nor said I was right, but at the same time never resented nor betrayed my interference. I believe she forgot it even, with the happy faculty that belonged to her nature, and has not an idea now that it was anything but the influence of love and preference, which made her cast off Llewellyn and choose Major Frost.

Sometimes, however, in the grey of the summer evenings, or the long, long winter nights, I think I might just as well have let things alone. There are two bright households the more in the world, no doubt. But the Admiral and I are both dull enough sometimes, now the girls are gone. He comes and sits with me, which is always company, and it is not his fault I have not changed my residence and my lonely condition. But I say to him, why should we change? and give the world occasion to laugh, and make a talk of us; at our age? Things are very well as they are. I believe we are better company to each other living next door, than if we were more closely allied; and our neighbours know us too well to make any talk about our friendship. But still it often happens, even when we are together,—in the still evenings, and in the firelight, and when all the world is abroad of summer nights,—that we both of us lament a little in the silence, and feel that it is very dull without the girls.

Bunarchy and Authority.

(CONTINUED.)

From a man without a philosophy no one can expect philosophical completeness. Therofto I may confess, without shame, that in trying to get a distinct notion of our aristocratic, our middle, and our working-class, with a view of testing the claims of each of these classes to become a centre of authority, I failed to complete the old-fashioned analysis which I was attempting, and did not show in those classes, as well as the virtuous mean and the excess, the defect also. I do not know that the omission very much matters ; still as clearness is the one merit which a plain, unsystematic writer, without a philosophy, can hope to have, and as our notion of the three great English classes may perhaps be made clearer if we see their distinctive qualities in the defect, as well as in the excess and in the mean, let us try, before proceeding further, to remedy this omission. It is manifest, if the perfect and virtuous mean of that fine spirit which is the distinctive quality of aristocracies, is to be found in Lord Elcho's chivalrous style, and its excess in Sir Thomas Bateson's turn for resistance, that its defect must lie in a spirit not bold and high enough, and in an excessive and pusillanimous unaptness for resistance. If, again, the perfect and virtuous mean of that force by which our middle-class has done its great works, and of that self-reliance with which it contemplates itself and them, is to be seen in the performances and speeches of Mr. Bazley, and the excess of that force and that self-reliance in the performances and speeches of the Rev. W. Cassel, then it is manifest that their defect must lie in a helpless inaptitude for the great works of the middle-class, and in a poor and despicable lack of its self-satisfaction. To be chosen to exemplify the happy mean of a good quality, or set of good qualities, is evidently a praise to a man ; nay, to be chosen to exemplify even their excess, is a kind of praise. Therefore I could have no hesitation in taking Lord Elcho and Mr. Bazley, the Rev. W. Cassel and Sir Thomas Bateson, to exemplify, respectively, the mean and the excess of aristocratic and middle-class qualities. But perhaps there might be a want of urbanity in singling out this or that personage as the representative of defect. Therefore I shall leave the defect of aristocracy unillustrated by any representative man. But with oneself one may always, without impropriety, deal quite freely ; and, indeed, this sort of plain-dealing with oneself has in it, as all the moralists tell us, something very wholesome. So I will venture to humbly offer myself as an illustration of defect in those forces and qualities which make our middle-class what it is. The

too well-founded reproaches of my opponents declare how little I have lent a hand to the great works of the middle-class ; for it is evidently these works, and my slackness at them, which are meant, when I am said to "refuse to lend a hand to the humble operation of uprooting certain definite evils" (such as church-rates and others), and that therefore "the believers in action grow impatient" with me. The line, again, of a still unsatisfied seeker which I have followed, the idea of self-transformation, of growing towards some measure of sweetness and light not yet reached, is evidently at clean variance with the perfect self-satisfaction current in my class, the middle-class, and may serve to indicate in me, therefore, the utter defect of this feeling. But these confessions, though salutary, are bitter and unpleasant.

To pass, then, to the working-class. The defect of this class would be the falling short in what Mr. Frederic Harrison calls those "bright powers of sympathy and ready powers of action," of which we saw in Mr. Odger the virtuous mean, and in Mr. Bradlaugh the excess. The working-class is so fast growing and rising at the present time, that instances of this defect cannot well be now very common. Perhaps Canning's *Needy Knifegrinder* (who is dead, and therefore cannot be pained at my taking him for an illustration) may serve to give us the notion of defect in the essential quality of a working-class ; or I might even cite (since, though he is alive in the flesh, he is dead to all heed of criticism) my poor old poaching friend, Zephariah Diggs, who, between his hare-snaring and his gin-drinking, has got his powers of sympathy quite dulled, and his powers of action in any great movement of his class hopelessly impaired. But examples of this defect belong, as I have said, to a bygone age rather than to the present.

The same desire for clearness, which has led me thus to extend a little my first analysis of the three great classes of English society, prompts me also to make my nomenclature for them a little fuller, with a view to making it thereby more clear and manageable. It is awkward and tiresome to be always saying the aristocratic class, the middle-class, the working-class. For the middle-class, for that great body which, as we know, "has done all the great things that have been done in all departments," and which is to be conceived as chiefly moving between its two cardinal points of Mr. Bazley and the Rev. W. Cassel, but inclining, in the mass, rather towards the latter than the former—for this class we have a designation which now has become pretty well known, and which we may as well still keep for them, the designation of Philistines. What this term means I have so often explained that I need not repeat it here. For the aristocratic class, conceived mainly as a body moving between the two cardinal points of Lord Elcho and Sir Thomas Bateson, but as a whole nearer to the latter than the former, we have as yet got no special designation. Almost all my attention has naturally been concentrated on my own class, the middle-class, with which I am in closest sympathy, and which has been, besides, the great power of our day, and has had its

praises sung by all speakers and newspapers. Still the aristocratic class is so important in itself, and the weighty functions which Mr. Carlyle proposes at the present critical time to commit to it must add so much to its importance, that it seems neglectful, and a strong instance of that want of coherent philosophic method for which Mr. Frederic Harrison blames me, to leave the aristocratic class so much without notice and denomination. It may be thought that the characteristic which I have occasionally mentioned as proper to aristocracies—their natural inaccessibility, as children of the established fact, to ideas—points to our extending to this class also the designation of Philistines; the Philistine being, as is well known, the enemy of the children of light, or servants of the idea. Nevertheless, there seems to be an inconvenience in thus giving one and the same designation to two very different classes; and besides, if we look into the thing closely, we shall find that the term Philistine conveys a sense which makes it more peculiarly appropriate to our middle class than to our aristocratic. For *Philistine* gives the notion of something particularly stiff-necked and perverse in the resistance to light and its children, and therein it specially suits our middle-class, who not only do not pursue sweetness and light, but who prefer to them that sort of machinery of business, chapels, tea-meetings, and addresses from Mr. Murphy and the Rev. W. Cassel, which makes up the dismal and illiberal life on which I have so often touched. But the aristocratic class has actually, as we have seen, in its well-known politeness, a kind of image or shadow of sweetness; and as for light, if it does not pursue light, it is not that it perversely cherishes some dismal and illiberal existence in preference to light, but it is seduced from following light by those mighty and eternal seducers of our race which weave for this class their most irresistible charms—by worldly splendour, security, power and pleasure. These seducers are exterior goods, but they are goods; and he who is hindered by them from caring for light and ideas, is not so much doing what is perverse as what is natural.

Keeping this in view, I have in my own mind often indulged myself with the fancy of putting side by side with the idea of our aristocratic class, the idea of the *Barbarians*. The Barbarians, to whom we all owe so much, and who reinvigorated and renewed our worn-out Europe, had, as is well known, eminent merits; and in this country, where we are for the most part sprung from the Barbarians, we have never had the prejudice against them which prevails among the races of Latin origin. The Barbarians brought with them that staunch individualism, as the modern phrase is, and that passion for doing as one likes, for the assertion of personal liberty, which appears to Mr. Bright the central idea of English life, and of which we have, at any rate, a very rich supply. The stronghold and natural seat of this passion was in the nobles of whom our aristocratic class are the inheritors; and this class, accordingly, have signally manifested it, and have done much by their example to recommend it to the body of the nation, who already, indeed, had it in their blood. The Barbarians, again,

had the passion for field-sports ; and they have handed it on to our aristocratic class, who of this passion too, as of the passion for asserting one's personal liberty, are the great natural stronghold. The care of the Barbarians for the body, and for all manly exercises ; the vigour, good looks, and bright complexion which they acquired and perpetuated in their families by these means—all this may be observed still in our aristocratic class. The chivalry of the Barbarians, with its characteristics of high spirit, fine manners, and distinguished bearing—what is this but the beautiful commencement of the politeness of our aristocratic class ? In some Barbarian noble one would have admired, if one could have been then alive to see it, the rudiments of Lord Elcho. Only, all this culture (to call it by that name) of the Barbarians was an exterior culture mainly : it consisted principally in outward gifts and graces, in looks, manners, accomplishments, prowess ; the chief inward gifts which had part in it were the most exterior, so to speak, of inward gifts, those which come nearest to outward ones : they were courage, a high spirit, self-reliance. Far within, and unawakened, lay a whole range of powers of thought and feeling, to which these interesting productions of nature had, from the circumstances of their life, no access. Making allowances for the difference of the times, surely we can observe precisely the same thing in our aristocratic class. In general its culture is exterior chiefly ; all the exterior graces and accomplishments, and the more external of the inward virtues, seem to be principally its portion. It now, of course, cannot but be often in contact with those studies by which, from the world of thought and feeling, true culture teaches us to fetch sweetness and light ; but its hold upon these very studies appears remarkably external, and unable to exert any deep power upon its spirit. Therefore the one insufficiency which we noted in the perfect mean of this class, Lord Elcho, was an insufficiency of light. And owing to the same causes, does not a subtle criticism lead us to make, even on the good looks and politeness of our aristocratic class, the one qualifying remark, that in these charming gifts there should perhaps be, for ideal perfection, a shade more *soul* ?

I often, therefore, when I want to distinguish clearly the aristocratic class from the Philistines proper, or middle-class, name the former, in my own mind, *the Barbarians* ; and when I go through the country, and see this and that beautiful and imposing seat of theirs crowning the landscape, "There," I say to myself, "is a great fortified post of the Barbarians."

It is obvious that that part of the working-class which, working diligently by the light of Mrs. Gooch's Golden Rule, looks forward to the happy day when it will sit on thrones with Mr. Bazley and other middle-class potentates, to survey, as Mr. Bright beautifully says, "the cities it has built, the railroads it has made, the manufactures it has produced, the cargoes which freight the ships of the greatest mercantile navy the world has ever seen,"—it is obvious, I say, that this part of the working-class is, or is in a fair way to be, one in spirit with the industrial middle-

class. It is notorious that our middle-class Liberals have long looked forward to this consummation, when the working-class shall join forces with them, aid them heartily to carry forward their great works, go in a body to their tea-meetings, and, in short, enable them to bring about their millennium. That part of the working-class, therefore, which does really seem to lend itself to these great aims, may, with propriety, be numbered by us among the *Philistines*. That part of it, again, which so much occupies the attention of philanthropists at present—the part which gives all its energies to organizing itself, through trades' unions and other means, so as to constitute, first, a great working-class power, independent of the middle and aristocratic classes, and then, by dint of numbers, give the law to them, and itself reign absolutely,—this lively and interesting part must also, according to our definition, go with the *Philistines*; because it is its class and its class-instinct which it seeks to affirm, its ordinary self not its best self; and it is a machinery, an industrial machinery, and power and pre-eminence and other external goods which fill its thoughts, and not an inward perfection. It is wholly occupied, according to Plato's subtle expression, with the things of itself and not its real self, with the things of the State and not the real State. That vast portion, lastly, of the working-class which, raw and half-developed, has long lain half hidden amidst its poverty and squalor, and is now issuing from its hiding-place to assert an Englishman's heaven-born privilege of doing as he likes, and is beginning to perplex us by marching where it likes, meeting where it likes, bawling what it likes, breaking what it likes,—to this vast residuum we may with great propriety give the name of *Populace*.

Thus we have got three distinct terms, *Barbarians*, *Philistines*, *Populace*, to denote roughly the three great classes into which our society is divided; and though this humble attempt at a scientific nomenclature falls, no doubt, very far short in precision of what might be required from a writer equipped with a complete and coherent philosophy, yet, from a notoriously unsystematic and unpretending writer, it will, I trust, be accepted as sufficient.

But, in using this new, and, I hope, convenient division of English society, two things are to be borne in mind. The first is, that since, under all our class divisions, there is a common basis of human nature, therefore, in every one of us, whether we be properly *Barbarians*, *Philistines*, or *Populace*, there exists, sometimes only in germ and potentially, sometimes more or less developed, the same tendencies and passions which have made our fellow-citizens of other classes what they are. This consideration is very important, because it has great influence in begetting that spirit of indulgence which is a necessary part of sweetness, and which, indeed, when our culture is complete, is, as I have said, inexhaustible. Thus, an English *Barbarian* who examines himself, will, in general, find himself to be not so entirely *Barbarian* but that he has in him, also, something of the *Philistines*, and even something of the

Populace as well. And the same with Englishmen of the two other classes. This is an experience which we may all verify every day. For instance, I myself (I again take myself as a sort of *corpus vile* to serve for illustration in a matter where serving for illustration may not by every one be thought agreeable), I myself am properly a Philistine—Mr. Swinburne would add, the son of a Philistine—and though, through circumstances which will, perhaps, one day be known, if ever the affecting history of my conversion comes to be written, I have, for the most part, broken with the ideas and the tea-meetings of my own class; yet I have not, on that account, been brought any nearer to the ideas and works of the Barbarians or of the Populace. Nevertheless, I never take a gun or a fishing-rod in my hands without feeling that I have in the ground of my nature the self-same seeds which, fostered by circumstances, do so much to make the Barbarian; and that, with the Barbarian's advantages, I might have rivalled him. Place me in one of his great fortified posts, with these seeds of a love for field-sports sown in my nature, with all the means of developing them, with all pleasures at my command, with most whom I met deferring to me, every one I met smiling on me, and with every appearance of permanence and security before me and behind me—then I, too, might have grown, I feel, into a very passable child of the established fact, of commendable spirit and politeness, and, at the same time, a little inaccessible to ideas and light; not, of course, with either the eminent fine spirit of Lord Elcho, or the eminent power of resistance of Sir Thomas Bateson, but, according to the measure of the common run of mankind, something between the two. And as to the Populace, who, whether he be Barbarian or Philistine, can look at them without sympathy, when he remembers how often—every time that we snatch up a vehement opinion in ignorance and passion, every time that we long to crush an adversary by sheer violence, every time that we are envious, every time that we are brutal, every time that we adore mere power or success, every time that we add our voice to swell a blind clamour against some unpopular personage, every time that we trample savagely on the fallen—he has found in his own bosom the eternal spirit of the Populace, and that there needs only a little help from circumstances to make it triumph in him untameably?

The second thing to be borne in mind I have indicated several times already. It is this. All of us, so far as we are Barbarians, Philistines, or Populace, imagine happiness to consist in doing what one's ordinary self likes. What one's ordinary self likes differs according to the class to which one belongs, and has its severer and its lighter side; always, however, remaining machinery, and nothing more. The graver self of the Barbarian likes honours and consideration; his more relaxed self, field-sports and pleasure. The graver self of one kind of Philistine likes business and money-making; his more relaxed self, comfort and tea-meetings. Of another kind of Philistine, the graver self likes trades' unions; the relaxed self, deputations, or hearing Mr. Odger speak. The sterner self of the Populace likes bawl-

ing, hustling, and smashing ; the lighter self, beer. But in each class there are born a certain number of natures with a curiosity about their best self, with a bent for seeing things as they are, for disentangling themselves from machinery, for simply concerning themselves with reason and the will of God, and doing their best to make them prevail ; for the pursuit, in a word, of perfection. To certain manifestations of this love for perfection mankind have accustomed themselves to give the name of genius ; implying, by this name, something original and heaven-bestowed in the passion. But the passion is to be found far beyond those manifestations of it to which the world usually gives the name of genius, and in which there is, for the most part, a *talent* of some kind or other, a special and striking faculty of execution, informed by the heaven-bestowed ardour, or genius. It is to be found in many manifestations besides these, and may best be called, as we have called it, the love and pursuit of perfection, culture being the true nurse of the pursuing love, and sweetness and light the true character of the pursued perfection. Natures with this bent emerge in all classes—among the Barbarians, among the Philistines, among the Populace. And this bent always tends, as I have said, to take them out of their class, and to make their distinguishing characteristic not their Barbarianism or their Philistinism, but their *humanity*. They have, in general, a bad time of it in their lives ; but they are sown more abundantly than one might think—they appear where and when one least expects it, they set up a fire which enfilades, so to speak, the class with which they are rankod ; and, in general, by the extrication of their best self as the self to develope, and by the simplicity of the ends fixed by them as paramount, they hinder the unchecked predominance of that class-life which is the affirmation of our ordinary self, and seasonably disconcert mankind in their worship of machinery.

Therefore, when we speak of ourselves as divided into Barbarians, Philistines, and Populace, we must be understood always to imply that within each of these classes there are a certain number of *aliens*, if we may so call them—persons who are mainly led, not by their class spirit, but by a general *humane* spirit, by the love of human perfection ; and that this number is capable of being diminished or augmented. I mean, the number of those who will succeed in developing this happy instinct will be greater or smaller, in proportion both to the force of the original instinct within them, and to the hindrance or encouragement which it meets with from without. In almost all who have it, it is mixed with some infusion of the spirit of an ordinary self, some quantity of class-instinct, and even, as has been shown, of more than one class-instinct at the same time ; so that, in general, the extrication of the best self, the predominance of the *humane* instinct, will very much depend upon its meeting, or not, with what is fitted to help and elicit it. At a moment, therefore, when it is agreed that we want a source of authority, and when it seems probable that the right source is our best self, it becomes of vast importance to see whether or not the things around us are, in general,

such as to help and elicit our best self, and if they are not, to see why they are not, and the most promising way of mending them.

Now, it is clear that the very absence of any powerful authority amongst us, and the prevalent doctrine of the duty and happiness of doing as one likes, and asserting our personal liberty, must tend to prevent the erection of any very strict standard of excellence, the belief in any very paramount authority of right reason, the recognition of our best self as anything very recondite and hard to come at. It may be, as I have said, a proof of our honesty that we do not attempt to give to our ordinary self, as we have it in action, predominant authority, and to impose its rule upon other people; but it is evident, also, that it is not easy, with our style of proceeding, to get beyond the notion of an ordinary self at all, or to get the paramount authority of a commanding best self, or right reason, recognized. The immortal Martinus Scriblerus well says:—"The taste of the bathos is implanted by nature itself in the soul of man; till, perverted by custom or example, he is taught, or rather compelled, to relish the sublime." But with us everything seems directed to prevent any such perversion of us by custom or example as might compel us to relish the sublime; by all means we are encouraged to keep our natural taste for the bathos unimpaired. I have formerly pointed out how in literature the absence of any authoritative centre, like an Academy, tends to do this; each section of the public has its own literary organ, and the mass of the public is without any suspicion that the value of these organs is relative to their being nearer a certain ideal centre of correct information, taste, and intelligence, or farther away from it. I have said that within certain limits—which any one who is likely to read this will have no difficulty in drawing for himself—my old adversary, the *Saturday Review*, may, on matters of literature and taste, be fairly enough regarded, relatively to a great number of newspapers which treat these matters, as a kind of organ of reason. But I remember once conversing with a company of Nonconformist admirers of some lecturer who had let off a great fire-work, which the *Saturday Review* said was all noise and false lights, and feeling my way as tenderly as I could about the effect of this unfavourable judgment upon those with whom I was conversing: "Oh," said one who was their spokesman, with the most tranquil air of conviction, "*It is true* the *Saturday Review* abuses the lecture, but the *British Banner*" (I am not quite sure it was the *British Banner*, but it was some newspaper of that stamp) "says that the *Saturday Review* is quite wrong." The speaker had evidently no notion that there was a scale of value for judgments on these topics, and that the judgments of the *Saturday Review* ranked high on this scale, and those of the *British Banner* low; the taste of the bathos implanted by nature in the literary judgments of man had never, in my friend's case, encountered any let or hindrance.

Just the same in religion as in literature. We have most of us little idea of a high standard to choose our guides by, of a great and profound spirit, which is an authority, while inferior spirits are none; it is enough

to give importance to things that this or that person says them decisively, and has a large following of some strong kind when he says them. This habit of ours is very well shown in that able and interesting work of Mr. Hepworth Dixon's, which we were all reading last year, *The Mormons, by One of Themselves*. Here, again, I am not quite sure that my memory serves me as to the exact title, but I mean the well-known book in which Mr. Hepworth Dixon described the Mormons, and other similar religious bodies in America, with so much detail and such warm sympathy. In this work it is enough for Mr. Dixon that this or that doctrine has its Rabbi who talks big to him, has a staunch body of disciples, and, above all, has plenty of rifles; that there are any further stricter tests to be applied to a doctrine before it is pronounced important never seems to occur to him. "It is easy to say," he writes of the Mormons, "that these saints are dupes and fanatics, to laugh at Joe Smith and his church, but what then? *The great facts remain*. Young and his people are at Utah; a church of 200,000 souls; an army of 20,000 rifles." But if the followers of a doctrine are really dupes, or worse, and its promulgators are really fanatics, or worse, it gives the doctrine no seriousness or authority the more that there should be found 200,000 souls—200,000 of the innumerable multitude with a natural taste for the bathos—to hold it, and 20,000 rifles to defend it. And again, of another religious organization in America: "A fair and open field is not to be refused when hosts so mighty throw down wager of battle on behalf of what they hold to be true, however strange their faith may seem." A fair and open field is not to be refused to any speaker; but this solemn way of heralding him is quite out of place unless he has, for the best reason and spirit of man, some significance. "Well, but," says Mr. Hepworth Dixon, "a theory which has been accepted by men like Judge Edmonds, Dr. Hare, Elder Frederick, and Professor Bush!" And again: "Such are, in brief, the bases of what Newman Weeks, Sarah Horton, Deborah Butler, and the associated brethren, proclaimed in Rolt's Hall as the new covenant!" If he was summing up an account of the teaching of Plato or St. Paul, Mr. Hepworth Dixon could not be more earnestly reverential. But the question is, have personages like Judge Edmonds, and Newman Weeks, and Elderess Polly, and Elderess Antoinette, and the rest of Mr. Hepworth Dixon's heroes and heroines, anything of the weight and significance for the best reason and spirit of man that Plato and St. Paul have? Evidently they, at present, have not; and a very small taste of them and their doctrines ought to have convinced Mr. Hepworth Dixon that they never could have. "But," says he, "the magnetic power which Shakerism is exercising on American thought would of itself compel us;" and so on. Now as far as real thought is concerned—thought which affects the best reason and spirit of man, the scientific thought of the world, the only thought which deserves speaking of in this solemn way—America has up to the present time been hardly more than a province of England, and even now would not herself claim to be more than abreast of England; and of this only real human thought,

English thought itself is not just now, as we must all admit, one of the most significant factors. Neither, then, can American thought be ; and the magnetic power which Shakerism exercises on American thought is about as important, for the best reason and spirit of man, as the magnetic power which the Rev. W. Cassel exercises on Birmingham Protestantism. And as we shall never get rid of our natural taste for the bathos in religion—never get access to a best self and right reason which may stand as a serious authority—by treating the Rev. W. Cassel as his own disciples treat him, seriously, and as if he was as much an authority as any one else, so we shall never get rid of it while our able and popular writers treat their Joe Smiths and Deborah Butlers, with their so many thousand souls and so many thousand rifles, in the like exaggerated and misleading manner, and so do their best to confirm us in a bad mental habit to which we are already too prone.

If our habits make it hard for us to come at the idea of a high best self, of a paramount authority, in literature or religion, how much more do they make this hard in the sphere with which we are at present specially concerning ourselves—the sphere of politics ! In other countries, the governors, not depending so immediately on the favour of the governed, have everything to urge them, if they know anything of right reason (and it is at least supposed that governors should know more of this than the mass of the governed), to set it authoritatively before the community. But our whole scheme of government being representative, every one of our governors has all possible temptation, instead of setting up before the governed who elect him, and on whose favour he depends, a high standard of right reason, to accommodate himself as much as possible to their natural taste for the bathos ; and even if he tries to go counter to it, to proceed in this with so much flattering and coaxing, that they shall not suspect their ignorance and prejudices to be anything very unlike right reason, or their natural taste for the bathos to differ much from a relish for the sublime. Every one is thus in every possible way encouraged to trust in his own heart ; but “ he that trusteth in his own heart,” says the Wise Man, “ is a fool ; ” and at any rate this, which Bishop Wilson says, is undeniably true : “ The number of those who need to be awakened is far greater than that of those who need comfort.” But in our political system everybody is comforted. Our guides and governors who have to be elected by the influence of the Barbarians, and who depend on their favour, sing the praises of the Barbarians, and say all the smooth things that can be said of them. With Mr. Tennyson, they celebrate “ the great broad-shouldered genial Englishman,” with his “ sense of duty,” his “ reverence for the laws,” and his “ patient force,” who saves us from the “ revolts, republics, revolutions, most no graver than a schoolboy’s barring out,” which upset other and less broad-shouldered nations. Our guides who are chosen by the Philistines and who have to look to their favour, tell the Philistines how “ all the world knows that the great middle-class of this country supplies the mind, the will, and the power requisite for all

the great and good things that have to be done," and congratulate them on their "earnest good sense, which penetrates through sophisms, ignores commonplaces, and gives to conventional illusions their true value." Our guides who look to the favour of the Populace, tell them that "theirs are the brightest powers of sympathy, and the readiest powers of action." Harsh things are said, too, no doubt, against all the great classes of the community; but these things so evidently come from a hostile class, and are so manifestly dictated by the passions and prepossessions of a hostile class, and not by right reason, that they make no serious impression on those at whom they are launched, but slide easily off their minds. For instance, when the Reform League orators inveigh against our cruel and tyrannical aristocracy, these invectives so evidently show the passions and point of view of the Populace, that they do not sink into the minds of those at whom they are addressed, or awaken any thought or self-examination in them. Again, when Sir Thomas Bateson describes the Philistines and the Populace as influenced with a kind of hideous passion for emasculating the aristocracy, that reproach so clearly comes from the wrath and excited imagination of the Barbarians, that it does not much set the Philistines and the Populace thinking. Or when Mr. Lowe calls the Populace drunken and venal, he so evidently calls them this in an agony of apprehension for his Philistine or middle-class Parliament, which has done so many great and heroic works, and is now threatened with mixture and debasement, that the Populace do not lay his words seriously to heart. So the voice which makes a permanent impression on each of our classes is the voice of its friends, and this is from the nature of things, as I have said, a comforting voice. The Barbarians remain in the belief that the great broad-shouldered genial Englishman may be well satisfied with himself; the Philistines remain in the belief that the great middle-class of this country, with its earnest common-sense penetrating through sophisms and ignoring commonplaces, may be well satisfied with itself: the Populace, that the working-man with his bright powers of sympathy and ready powers of action, may be satisfied with himself. What hope, at this rate, of extinguishing the taste of the bathos implanted by nature itself in the soul of man, or of inculcating the belief that excellence dwells among high and steep rocks, and can only be reached by those who sweat blood to reach her?

But it will be said, perhaps, that candidates for political influence and leadership, who thus caress the self-love of those whose suffrages they desire, know quite well that they are not saying the sheer truth as reason sees it, but that they are using a sort of conventional language, or what we call clap-trap, which is essential to the working of representative institutions. And therefore, I suppose, we ought rather to say with Figaro : *Qui est-ce qu'on trompe ici?* Now I admit that often, but not always, when our governors say smooth things to the self-love of the class whose political support they want, they know very well that they are overstepping, by a long stride, the bounds of truth and soberness, and while they talk they in a manner, no doubt, put their tongue in their

cheek. Not always ; because, when a Barbarian appeals to his own class to make him their representative and give him political power, he, whom he pleases their self-love by extolling broad-shouldered genial Englishmen with their sense of duty, reverence for the laws, and patient forte, pleases his own self-love and extols himself, and is, therefore, himself ensnared by his own smooth words. And so, too, when a Philistine wants to represent his brother Philistines, and extols the earnest good sense which characterizes Manchester, and supplies the mind, the will, and the power, as the *Daily News* eloquently says, requisite for all the great and good things that have to be done, he intoxicates and deludes himself as well as his brother Philistines who hear him. But it is true that a Barbarian often wants the political support of the Philistines ; and he unquestionably, when he flatters the self-love of Philistinism, and extols, in the approved fashion, its energy, enterprise, and self-reliance, continually striking out new paths of industry and subduing the forces of nature, knows that he is talking clap-trap, and, so to say, puts his tongue in his cheek. On all matters where Nonconformity and its catchwords are concerned, this insincerity of Barbarians needing Nonconformist support, and, therefore, flattering the self-love of Nonconformity and repeating its catchwords without the least real belief in them, is very noticeable. When the Nonconformists, in a transport of blind zeal, threw out Sir James Graham's useful Education Clauses in 1848, one-half of their parliamentary representatives, no doubt, who cried aloud against "trampling on the religious liberty of the Dissenters by taking the money of Dissenters to teach the tenets of the Church of England," put their tongue in their cheek while they so cried out. And perhaps there is even a sort of motion of Mr. Frederic Harrison's tongue towards his cheek when he talks of the "shriek of superstition," and tells the working-class that theirs are the brightest powers of sympathy and the readiest powers of action. But the point on which I would insist is, that this involuntary tribute to truth and soberness on the part of certain of our governors and guides never reaches at all the mass of the governed, to serve as a lesson to us, to abate our self-love, and to awaken in us a suspicion that our favourite prejudices may be, to a higher reason, all nonsense. Whatever by-play goes on among the more intelligent of our leaders, we do not see it ; and we are left to believe that, not only in our own eyes, but in the eyes of our representative and ruling men, there is nothing more admirable than our ordinary self, whatever our ordinary self happens to be—Barbarian, Philistine, or Populace.

Thus everything in our political life tends to hide from us that there is anything wiser than our ordinary selves, and to prevent our getting the notion of a paramount right reason. Royalty itself, in its idea the expression of the collective nation, and a sort of constituted witness to its best mind, we try to turn into a kind of grand advertising van, to give publicity and credit to the inventions, sound or trashy, of the ordinary self of individuals. I remember, when I was in North Germany, having this very strongly brought to my mind in the matter of schools and their institution. In Prussia, the

best schools are Crown patronage schools, as they are called : schools which have been established and endowed (and new ones are to this day being established and endowed) by the Sovereign himself out of his own revenues, to be under the direct control and management of him or of those representing him, and to serve as types of what schools should be. The Sovereign, as his position raises him above many prejudices and littlenesses, and as he can always have at his disposal the best advice, has evident advantages over private founders in well planning and directing a school ; while at the same time his great means and his great influence secure, to a well-planned school of his, credit and authority. This is what, in North Germany, the governors do, in the matter of education, for the governed ; and one may say that they thus give the governed a lesson, and draw out in them the idea of a right reason higher than the suggestions of an ordinary man's ordinary self. But in England how different is the part which in this matter our governors are accustomed to play ! The Licensed Victuallers or the Commercial Travellers propose to make a school for their children ; and I suppose, in the matter of schools, one may call the Licensed Victuallers or the Commercial Travellers ordinary men, with the natural taste for the bathos tinctured ; and a Sovereign with the advice of men like Wilhelm von Humboldt or Schleiermacher may, in this matter, be a better judge, and nearer to right reason. And it will be allowed, probably, that right reason would suggest that, to have a sheer school of licensed victuallers' children, or a sheer school of commercial travellers' children, and to bring them all up, not only at home but at school too, in a kind of odour of licensed victualism or of bagmanism, is not a wise training to give to these children. And in Germany, I have said, the action of the national guides or governors is to suggest and provide a better. But in England the action of the national guides or governors is for a royal prince or a great minister to go down to the opening of the licensed victuallers' or of the commercial travellers' school, to take the chair, to extol the energy and self-reliance of the licensed victuallers or the commercial travellers, to be all of their way of thinking, to predict full success to their schools, and never so much as to hint to them that they are doing a very foolish thing, and that the right way to go to work with their children's education is quite different. And it is the same in almost every department of affairs. While, on the Continent, the idea prevails that it is the business of the heads and representatives of the nation, by virtue of their superior means, power, and information, to set an example and to provide suggestions of right reason, aiming us the idea is that the business of the heads and representatives of the nation is nothing of the kind, but to applaud the natural taste for the bathos showing itself vigorously in any part of the community, and to encourage its works.

Now I do not say that the political system of foreign countries has not inconveniences which may outweigh the inconveniences of our own political system ; nor am I the least proposing to get rid of our own political system and to adopt theirs. But a sound centre of authority being what, in this

disquisition, we have been led to seek, and right reason, or our best self, appearing alone to offer such a sound centre of authority, it is necessary to take note of the chief impediments which hinder, in this country, the extrication or recognition of this right reason as a paramount authority, with a view to afterwards trying in what way they can best be removed.

This being borne in mind, I proceed to remark how not only do we get no suggestions of right reason, and no rebukes of our ordinary self, from our governors, but a kind of philosophical theory is widely spread among us to the effect that there is no such thing at all as a best self and a right reason having claim to paramount authority, or, at any rate, no such thing ascertainable and capable of being made use of; and that there is nothing but an infinite number of ideas and works of our ordinary selves, and suggestions of our natural taste for the bathos, pretty equal in value, which are doomed either to an irreconcileable conflict, or else to a perpetual give and take; and that wisdom consists in choosing the give and take rather than the conflict, and in sticking to our choice with patience and good humour. And, on the other hand, we have another philosophical theory rife among us, to the effect that without the labour of perverting ourselves by custom or example to relish right reason, but by continuing all of us to follow freely our natural taste for the bathos, we shall, by the mercy of Providence, and by a kind of natural tendency of things, come in time to relish and follow right reason. The great promoters of those philosophical theories are our newspapers, which, no less than our parliamentary representatives, may be said to act the part of guides and governors to us; and these favourite doctrines of theirs I call—or should call if the doctrines were not preached by authorities I so much respect—the first, a peculiarly British form of atheism, the second, a peculiarly British form of quietism. The first-named melancholy doctrine is preached in *The Times* with great clearness and beauty of style; indeed, it is well known, from the example of the poet Lucretius and others, what great masters of style this sad doctrine has always counted among its promulgators. "It is of no use," says *The Times*, "for us to attempt to force upon our neighbours our several likings and dislikings. We must take things as they are. Everybody has his own little vision of religious or civil perfection. Under the evident impossibility of satisfying everybody, we agree to take our stand on equal laws and on a system as open and liberal as is possible. The result is that everybody has more liberty of action and of speaking here than anywhere else in the Old World." We come again here upon Mr. Roe buck's celebrated definition of happiness, on which I have so often commented: "I look around me and ask what is the state of England? Is not every man able to say what he likes? I ask you whether the world over, or in past history, there is anything like it? Nothing. I pray that our unrivalled happiness may last." This is the old story of our system of checks and every Englishman doing as he likes, which we have already seen to have been convenient enough, so long as there were only the Barbarians and the Philistines to do what they liked, but to be

getting inconvenient now that the Populace wants to do what it likes too. But for all that, I will not at once dismiss this famous doctrine, but will first quote another passage from *The Times*, applying the doctrine to a matter of which we have just been speaking—education. “The difficulty here,” says *The Times*, “does not reside in any removable arrangements. It is inherent and native in the actual and inveterate state of things in this country. All these powers and personages, all these conflicting influences and varieties of character, exist, and have long existed among us; they are fighting it out, and will long continue to fight it out, without coming to that happy consummation when some one element of the British character is to destroy or to absorb all the rest.” There it is; the various promptings of the natural taste for the bathos in this man and that amongst us are fighting it out; and the day will never come (and, indeed, why should we wish it to come?) when one man’s particular sort of taste for the bathos shall tyrannize over another man’s; nor when right reason (if that may be called an element of the British character) shall absorb and rule them all. “The whole system of this country, like the constitution we boast to inherit, and are glad to uphold, is made up of established facts, prescriptive authorities, existing usages, powers that be, persons in possession, and communities or classes that have won dominion for themselves, and will hold it against all comers.” Every force in the world, evidently, except the one reconciling force, right reason! Sir Thomas Bateson here, the Rev. W. Cassel on this side, Mr. Bradlaugh on that! pull devil, pull baker! presented with the mastery of style of our leading journal, the sad picture, as one gazes upon it, assumes the iron and inexorable solemnity of tragic destiny.

After this, the milder doctrine of our other philosophical teacher, the *Daily News*, has, at first, something very attractive and assuaging. The *Daily News* begins, indeed, in appearance, to weave the iron web of necessity round us like *The Times*. “The alternative is between a man’s doing what he likes and his doing what some one else, probably not one whit wiser than himself, likes.” This points to the tacit compact, mentioned in my last paper, between the Barbarians and the Philistines, and into which it is hoped that the Populace will one day enter; the compact, so creditable to English honesty, that no class, if it exercise power, having only the ideas and aims of its ordinary self to give effect to, shall treat its ordinary self too seriously, or attempt to impose it on others; but shall let these others—the Rev. W. Cassel, for instance, in his Papist-baiting, and Mr. Bradlaugh in his Hyde Park anarchy-mongering, have their fling. But then the *Daily News* suddenly lights up the gloom of necessitarianism with bright beams of hope. “No doubt,” it says, “the common reason of society ought to check the aberrations of individual eccentricity.” This common reason of society looks very like our best self or right reason, to which we want to give authority, by making the action of the *State*, or nation in its collective character, the expression of it. But of this project of ours, the *Daily News*, with its

subtle dialectics, makes havoc. "Make the State the organ of the common reason?" it says. "You may make it the organ of something or other, but how can you be certain that reason will be the quality which will be embodied in it?" You cannot be certain of it, undoubtedly, if you never try to bring the thing about; but the question is, the action of the State being the action of the collective nation, and the action of the collective nation carrying naturally great publicity, weight, and force of example with it, whether we should not try to put into the action of the State as much as possible of right reason, or our best self, which may, in this manner, come back to us with new force and authority, may have visibility, form, and influence, and help to confirm us, in the many moments when we are inclined to be our ordinary selves merely, in resisting our natural taste of the bathos rather than in giving way to it?

But no! says our teacher: "it is better there should be an infinite variety of experiments in human action, because, as the explorers multiply, the true track is more likely to be discovered. The common reason of society can check the aberrations of individual eccentricity only by acting on the individual reason; and it will do so in the main sufficiently, if left to this natural operation." This is what I call the specially British form of quietism, or a devout, but excessive, reliance on an over-ruling Providence. Providence, as the moralists are careful to tell us, generally works in human affairs by human means; so when we want to make right reason act on individual reason, our best self on our ordinary self, we seek to give it more power of doing so by giving it public recognition and authority, and embodying it, so far as we can, in the State. It seems too much to ask of Providence, that while we, on our part, leave our congenital taste for the bathos to its natural operation and its infinite variety of experiments, Providence should mysteriously guide it into the true track, and compel it to riplish the sublime. At any rate, great men and great institutions have hitherto seemed necessary for producing any considerable effect of this kind. No doubt we have an infinite variety of experiments, and an over-multiplying multitude of explorers; even in this short paper I have enumerated many: the *British Banner*, Judge Edmonds, Newman Weeks, Deborah Butler, Elderess Polly, Brother Noyes, the Rev. W. Cassel, the Licensed Victuallers, the Commercial Travellers, and I know not how many more; and the numbers of this noble army are swelling every day. But what a depth of quietism, or rather, what an over-bold call on the direct interposition of Providence, to believe that these interesting explorers will discover the true track, or at any rate, "will do so in the main sufficiently" (whatever that may mean) if left to their natural operation; that is, by going on as they are! Philosophers say, indeed, that we learn virtue by performing acts of virtue; but to say that we shall learn virtue by performing any acts to which our natural taste for the bathos carries us, that the Rev. W. Cassel comes at his best self by Papist-baiting, or Newman Weeks and Deborah Butler at right reason by following their noses, this certainly does appear over-sanguine.

It is true what we want is to make right reason set on individual reason, the reason of individuals ; all our search for authority has that for its end and aim. The *Daily News* says, I observe, that all my argument for authority "has a non-intellectual root;" and from what I know of my own mind and its inertness, I think this so probable, that I should be inclined easily to admit it, if it were not that, in the first place, nothing of this kind, perhaps, should be admitted without examination ; and in the second, a way of accounting for this charge being made in this particular instance without full grounds, appears to present itself. What seems to me to account here, perhaps, for the charge, is the want of flexibility of our race, on which I have so often remarked. I mean, it being admitted that the conformity of the individual reason of the Rev. W. Cassel or Mr. Bradlaugh with right reason is our true object, and not the mere restraining them, by the strong arm of the State, from Papist-hating or railing-breaking—admitting this, we have so little flexibility that we cannot readily perceive that the State's restraining them from these indulgences may yet fix clearly in their minds that, to the collective nation, these indulgences appear irrational and unallowable, may make them pause and reflect, and may contribute to bringing, with time, their individual reason into harmony with right reason. But in no country, owing to the want of intellectual flexibility above mentioned, is the leaning which is our natural one, and, therefore, needs no recommending to us, so sedulously recommended, and the leaning which is not our natural one, and, therefore, does not need dispraising to us, so sedulously dispraised, as in ours. To rely on the individual being, with us, the natural leaning, we will hear of nothing but the good of relying on the individual ; to act through the collective nation on the individual being not our natural leaning, we will hear nothing in recommendation of it. But the wise know that we often need to hear most of that to which we are least inclined, and even to learn to employ, in certain circumstances, that which is capable, if employed amiss, of being a danger to us.

Elsewhere this is far better understood than here. In the last number of the *Westminster Review*, an able writer, but with precisely our national want of flexibility of which I have been speaking, has unearthed, I see, for our present needs, an English translation, published some years ago, of Wilhelm von Humboldt's book, *The Spheres and Duties of Government*. Humboldt's object in this book is to show that the operation of Government ought to be severely limited to what directly and immediately relates to the security of person and property. Wilhelm von Humboldt, one of the most beautiful and perfect souls that have ever existed, used to say that one's business in life was, first, to perfect oneself by all the means in one's power, and, secondly, to try and create in the world around one an aristocracy, the most numerous that one possibly could, of talents and characters. He saw, of course, that, in the end, everything comes to this, that the individual must act for himself, and must be perfect in himself ; and he lived in a

country, Germany, where people were disposed to act too little for themselves, and to rely too much on the Government. But even thus, such was his flexibility, so little was he in bondage to a mere abstract maxim, that he saw very well that for his purpose itself of enabling the individual to stand perfect on his own foundations, and to do without the State, the action of the State would for long, long years be necessary ; and soon after he wrote his book on *The Sphere and Duties of Government*, Wilhelm von Humboldt became Minister of Education in Prussia, and from his ministry all the great reforms which give the control of Prussian education to the State—the transference of the management of public schools from their old boards of trustees to the State, the obligatory State-examination for schools, the obligatory State-examination for schoolmasters, and the foundation of the great State University of Berlin—take their origin. This his English reviewer says not a word of ; perhaps he did not know it, it is possible he would not have understood it if he had known it. But writing for a people whose dangers lie, as we have seen, on the side of their unchecked and unguided individual action, whose dangers none of them lie on the side of an over-reliance on the State, he quotes just so much of Wilhelm von Humboldt's example as can flatter them in their propensities, and do them no good ; and just what might make them think, and be of use to them, he leaves on one side. This precisely recalls the manner, it will be observed, in which we have seen that our royal and noble personages proceed with the Licensed Victuallers.

In France the action of the State on individuals is yet more ponderant than in Germany ; and the need which friends of human perfection feel to enable the individual to stand perfect on his own foundations is all the stronger. But what says one of the keenest of these friends, Monsieur Renan, on State action, and even State action in that very sphere where in France it is most excessive, the sphere of education ? Here are his words :—"A liberal believes in liberty, and liberty signifies the non-intervention of the State. *But such an ideal is still a long way off from us, and the very means to remove it to an indefinite distance would be precisely the State's withdrawing its action too soon.*" And this, he adds, is even truer of education than of any other department of public affairs.

We see, then, how indispensable to that human perfection which we seek is, in the opinion of good judges, some such public recognition and establishment of our best self, or right reason, as culture leads us to try and embody in the State. We see, too, the many inconveniences which come from its non-recognition, and the almost fanatical zeal which opposes itself to its recognition. These inconveniences and that zeal the lover of perfection must make himself thoroughly acquainted with, in order to see how they may be most fitly dealt with ; and as we have not yet exhausted the rich varieties of their development, or the lessons they have to teach us, we must return to the subject once more before concluding.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.



"George, George, do not give way thus!"

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

MARCH, 1868.

The Brandeighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MR. CUTBILL'S VISIT.



Mr.

"The 'Follett told me, he'd have known every act of your daily life."

"And so we shall have to leave this, now?" said Ellen, with some vexation in her tone.

"Not a bit of it. If you don't dislike the surveillance they'll bestow on you; and it'll be the very best protection against rogues and pick-

pockets ; and I'll go and say that you're not the man I suspected at all."

"Pray take no further trouble on our behalf, sir," said Bramleigh, stiffly and haughtily.

"Which being interpreted means,—make your visit as short as may be, and go your way, Tom Cutbill—don't it?"

"I am not prepared to say, sir, that I have yet guessed the object of your coming."

"If you go to that, I suspect I'll be as much puzzled as yourself. I came to see you because I heard you were in my neighbourhood. I don't think I had any other very pressing reason. I had to decamp from England somewhat hurriedly, and I came over here to be, as they call it, 'out of the way,' till this storm blows over."

"What storm? I've heard nothing of a storm."

"You've not heard that the Lisconnor scheme has blown up?—the great Culduff Mining Company has exploded, and blown all the shareholders sky-high?"

"Not a word of it."

"Why, there's more writs after the promoters this morning than ever there was scrip for paid-up capital. We're all in for it—every man of us."

"Was it a mere bubble then—a fraud?"

"I don't know what you call a bubble, or what you mean by a fraud. We had all that constitutes a company: we had a scheme and we had a lord. If an over-greedy public wants grandeur and gain besides, it must be disappointed; as I told the general meeting, 'You don't expect profit as well as the peerage, do you?'"

"You yourself told me there was coal."

"So there was. I am ready to maintain it still. Isn't that Madame, Bramleigh?" said he, taking a handful of silver from his pocket; "good coin of the realm, with her Majesty's image? But if you ~~want~~ ^{wish} to know if there was much more where it came from—why, the ~~witness~~ ^{newspapers} say, hesitate and show confusion."

"You mean then, in short, there ~~was~~ ^{is} only coal enough to ~~serve~~ ^{be} a pretext for a company?"

"I'll tell you what I mean," said Cutbill sturdily. "I bolted from London rather than be stuck in a witness-box and badgered by a cross-examining barrister, and I'm not going to expose myself to the same sort of diversion here from you."

"I assure you, sir, the matter had no interest for me, beyond the opportunity it afforded you of exculpation."

"For the exculpatory part, I can take it easy," said Cutbill, with a dry laugh. "I wish I had nothing heavier on my heart than the load of my conscience; but I've been signing my name to deeds, and writing Tom Cutbill across acceptances, in a sort of indiscriminate way, that in the ~~sojourner~~ hours before a Commissioner in Bankruptcy ain't so pleasant."

I must say, Bramleigh, your distinguished relative Culduff doesn't cut up well."

"I think, Mr. Cutbill, if you have any complaint to make of Lord Culduff, you might have chosen a more fitting auditor than his brother-in-law."

"I thought the world had outgrown the cant of connection. I thought that we had got to be so widely-minded that you might talk to a man about his sister as freely as if she were the Queen of Sheba."

"Pray do me the favour to believe me still a bigot, sir."

"How far is Lord Culduff involved in the mishap you speak of, Mr. Cutbill?" said Nelly, with a courteousness of tone she hoped might restore their guest to a better humour.

"I think he'll net some five-and-twenty thousand out of the transaction; and from what I know of the distinguished viscount, he'll not lie awake at night fretting over the misfortunes of Tom Cutbill and fellows."

"Will this—this misadventure," stammered out Augustus, "prevent your return to England?"

"Only for a season. A man lies by for these things, just as he does for a thunderstorm; a little patience and the sun shines out, and he walks about freely as ever. If it were not, besides, for this sort of thing, we City men would never have a day's recreation in life; nothing but work, work, from morning till night. How many of us would see Switzerland, I ask you, if we didn't smash? The Insolvent Court is the way to the Rhine, Bramleigh, take my word for it, though it ain't set down in John Murray."

"If a light heart could help to a light conscience, I must say, Mr. Cutbill, you would appear to possess that enviable lot."

"There's such a thing as a very small conscience," said Cutbill, closing one eye, and looking intensely roguish. "A conscience so unobtrusive that one can treat it like a poor relation, and put it anywhere."

"Oh, Mr. Cutbill, you shock me," said Ellen, trying to look reproachful and grave.

"I'm sorry for it, Miss Bramleigh," said he, with mock sorrow in his manner.

"Had not our friend L'Estrange an interest in this unfortunate speculation?" asked Bramleigh.

"A trifle; a mere trifle. Two thousand I think it was. Two, or two-five-hundred. I forget exactly which."

"And is this entirely lost?"

"Well, pretty much the same; they talk of sevenpence dividend, but I suspect they're over-sanguine. I'd say five was nearer the mark."

"Do they know the extent of their misfortune?" asked Ellen, eagerly.

"If they read *The Times* they're sure to see it. The money article is awfully candid, and never attempts any delicate concealment, like the reports in a police-court. The fact is, Miss Bramleigh, the financial people always *gad like Crimbo*, with a 'grand transparency' that displays the whole company!"

"I'm so sorry for the L'Estranges," said Ellen, feelingly.

"And why not sorry for Tom Cutbill, miss? Why have no compassion for that gifted creature, and generous mortal, whose worst fault was that he believed in a lord?"

"Mr. Cutbill is so sure to sympathize with himself and his own griefs that he has no need of me; and then he looks so like one that would have recuperative powers."

"There you've hit it," cried he, enthusiastically. "That's it! that's what makes Tom Cutbill the man he is—*fleetus non frangis*. I hope I have it right; but I mean you may smooth him down but you can't smash him; and it's to tell the noble viscount as much I'm now on my way to Rome. I'll say to the distinguished peer, 'I'm only a pawn on the chess-board; but look to it, my lord, or I'll give check to the king!' Won't he understand me? ay, in a second too!"

"I trust something can be done for poor l'Estrange," said Augustus. "It was his sister's fortune; and the whole of it, too."

"Leave that to me, then. I'll make better terms for him than he'll get by the assignee under the court. Bless your heart, Bramleigh, if it wasn't for a little 'extramural equity,' as one might call it, it would go very hard with the widow and the orphan in this world; but we, coarse-minded fellows, as I've no doubt you'd call us, we do kinder things in our own way than Commissioners under the Act."

"Can you recover the money for them?" asked Augustus, earnestly; "can you do that?"

"Not legally—not a chance of it; but I think I'll make a noble lord of our acquaintance disgorge something handsome. I don't mean to press any claim of my own. If he behaves politely, and asks me to dine, and treats me like a gentleman, I'll not be over hard with him. I like the—not the conveniences—that's not the word, but the——"

"'Convenances,' perhaps," interposed Ellen.

"That's it,—the convenances. I like the attentions that seem to say, 'T. C. isn't to be kept in a tunnel or a cutting; but is good company at table, with long-necked bottles beside him. T. C. can be talked to about the world: about pale sherry, and pretty women, and the delights of Homburg, and the odds on the Derby; he's as much at home at Belgravia as on an embankment.'

"I suspect there will be few to dispute that," said Augustus, solemnly.

"Not when they knows it, Bramleigh; 'not when they knows it,' as the cabbies say. The thing is to make them know it, to make them feel it. There's a rough-and-ready way of putting all men like myself, who take liberties with the letter H, down as snobs; but you see, there's snobs and snobs. There's snobs that are only snobs; there's snobs that have nothing distinctive about them but their snobbery, and there's snobs so well up in life, so shrewd, such downright keen men of the world, that their snobbery is only an accident, like a splash from a passing 'bus, and, in fact, their snobbery puts a sort of accent on their acuteness, just like a trade-mark,

and tells you it was town-made;—no bad thing, Bramleigh, when that town calls itself London!"

If Augustus vouchsafed little approval of this speech, Ellen smiled an apparent concurrence, while in reality it was the man's pretension and assurance that amused her.

" You ain't as jolly as you used to be; how is that?" said Cutbill, shaking Bramleigh jocosely by the arm. " I suspect you are disposed, like Jeremiah, to a melancholy line of life?"

" I was not aware, sir, that my spirits could be matter of remark," said Augustus, haughtily.

" And why not? You're no highness, royal or serene, that one is obliged to accept any humour you may be in, as the right thing. You are one of us, I take it."

" A very proud distinction," said he, gravely.

" Well, if it's nothing to crow, it's nothing to cry for! If the world had nothing but top-sawyers, Bramleigh, there would be precious little work done. Is that clock of yours, yonder, right—is it so late as that?"

" I believe so," said Augustus, looking at his watch. " I want exactly ten minutes to four."

" And the train starts at four precisely. That's so like me. I've lost my train, all for the sake of paying a visit to people who wished me at the North Pole for my politeness."

" Oh, Mr. Cutbill," said Ellen, deprecatingly.

" I hope, Mr. Cutbill, we are fully sensible of the courtesy that suggested your call."

" And I'm fully sensible that you and Miss Ellen have been on thorns for the last half-hour, each muttering to himself, ' What will he say next? ' or, worse than that, ' When will he go? ' "

" I protest, sir, you are alike unjust to yourself and to us. We are so thoroughly satisfied that you never intended to hurt us, that if incidentally touched, we take it as a mere accident."

" That is quite the case, Mr. Cutbill," broke in Nelly; " and we know besides, that, if you had anything harsh or severe to say to us, it is not likely you'd take such a time as this to say it."

" You do me proud, ma'am," said Cutbill, who was not perfectly sure whether he was complimented or reprimanded.

" Do, please, Augustus; I beg of you do," whispered Nelly in her brother's ear.

" You've already missed your train for us, Mr. Cutbill," said Augustus; " will you add another sacrifice and come and eat a very humble dinner with us at six o'clock?"

" Will I? I rayther think I will," cried he, joyfully. " Now that the crisis is over, I may as well tell you I've been angling for that invitation for the last half-hour, saying every minute to myself, ' Now it's coming,' or, ' No, it ain't.' Twice you were on the brink of it, Bramleigh, and you drifted away again, and at last I began to think I'd be driven to my lonely

outlet at the 'Leopold's Arms.' You said six; so I'll just finish a couple of letters for the post, and be here sharp. Good-by. Many thanks for the invite, though it was pretty long a-coming." And with this he waved an adieu and departed.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

AN EVENING WITH CUTBILL.

WHEN Nelly retired after dinner on that day, leaving Mr. Cutbill to the enjoyment of his wine—an indulgence she well knew he would not willingly forego—that worthy individual drew one chair to his side to support his arm, and resting his legs on another, exclaimed, "Now, this is what I call cosy. There's a pleasant light, a nice bit of view out of that window, and as good a bottle of St. Julien as a man may desire."

"I wish I could offer you something better," began Augustus, but Cutbill stopped him at once, saying,—

"Taking the time of the year into account, there's nothing better! It's not the season for a Burgundy or even a full-bodied claret. Shall I tell you, Bramleigh, that you gave me a better dinner to-day than I got at your great house, the Bishop's Folly."

"We were very vain of our cook, notwithstanding, in those days," said Augustus, smiling.

"So you might. I suppose he was as good as money could buy—and you had plenty of money. But your dinners were grand, cumbrous, never-ending feeds, that with all the care a man might bestow on the bill-o'-fare, he was sure to eat too much of venison curry after he had taken mutton twice, and pheasant following after fat chickens. I always thought your big dinners were upside down; if one could have had the tail-end first they'd have been excellent. Somehow, I fancy it was only your brother Temple took an interest in these things at your house. Where is he now?"

"He's at Rome with my brother-in-law."

"That's exactly the company he ought to keep. A lord purifies the air for him, and I don't think his constitution could stand without one."

"My brother has seen a good deal of the world; and, I think, understands it tolerably well," said Bramleigh, meaning so much of rebuke to the other's impertinence as he could force himself to bestow on a guest.

"He knows as much about life as a dog knows about decimals. He knows the cad's life of 'fetch and carry; how to bow himself into a room and out again; when to smile, and when to snigger; how to look profound admiration when a great man talks, and a mild despair when he is silent; but that ain't life, Bramleigh, any more than these strawberries are grapes from Fontainebleau!"

"You occasionally forget, Mr. Cutbill, that a man's brother is not exactly the public."

"Perhaps I do. I only had one brother, and a greater blackguard never existed; and *The Times* took care to remind me of the fact every year till he was transported; but no one ever saw me lose temper about it."

"I can admire if I cannot envy your philosophy."

"It's not philosophy at all; it's just common sense, learned in the only school for that commodity in Europe—the City of London. We don't make Latin verses as well as you at Eton or Rugby, but we begin life somewhat 'cuter' than you, notwithstanding. If we speculate on events it is not like theoretical politicians, but like practical people, who know that Cabinet Councils decide the funds, and the funds make fortunes. You and the men like you advocated a free Greece and a united Italy for the sake of fine traditions. We don't care a rush about Homer or Dante, but we wanted to sell pig-iron and printed calicos. Do you see the difference now?"

"If I do, it's with no shame for the part you assign us."

"That's as it may be. There may be up there amongst the stars a planet where your ideas would be the right thing. Maybe Doctor Cumming knows of such a place. I can only say Tom Cutbill doesn't, nor don't want to."

For a while neither spoke a word; the conversation had taken a half irritable tone, and it was not easy to say how it was to be turned into a pleasanter channel.

"Any news of Jack?" asked Cutbill suddenly.

"Nothing since he sailed."

Another and a longer pause ensued, and it was evident neither knew how to break the silence.

"These ain't bad cigars," said Cutbill, knocking the ash off his cheroot with his finger. "You get them here?"

"Yes; they are very cheap."

• "Thirty, or thirty-five centimes?"

"Ten!"

"Well, it ain't dear! Ten centimes is a penny,—a trifle less than a penny. And now, Bramleigh, will you think it a great liberty of me, if I ask you a question,—a sort of personal question?"

"That will pretty much depend upon the question, Mr. Cutbill. There are matters, I must confess, I would rather not be questioned on."

"Well, I suppose I must just take my chance of that! If you are disposed to bristle up, and play porcupine because I want to approach you, it can't be helped,—better men than Tom Cutbill have paid for looking into a wasp's nest. It's no idle curiosity prompts my inquiry, though I won't deny there is a spicè of curiosity urging me on at this moment. Am I free to go on, eh?"

"I must leave you to your own discretion, sir."

"The devil a worse guide ever you'd leave me to. It is about as humble a member of the Cutbill family as I'm acquainted with. So that without any reference to my discretion at all, here's what I want. I want

to know how it is that you've left a princely house, with plenty of servants and all the luxuries of life, to come and live in a shabby corner of an obscure town and smoke penny cigars? There's the riddle I want you to solve for me."

For some seconds Bramleigh's confusion and displeasure seemed to master him completely, making all reply impossible; but at last he regained a degree of calm, and with a voice slightly agitated, said: "I am sorry to baulk your very natural curiosity, Mr. Cutbill, but the matter on which you seek to be informed is one strictly personal and private."

"That's exactly why I'm pushing for the explanation," resumed the other, with the coolest imaginable manner. "If it was a public event I'd have no need to ask to be enlightened."

Bramleigh winced under this rejoinder, and a slight contortion of the face showed what his self-control was costing him.

Cutbill, however, went on: "When they told me, at the Gresham, that there was a man setting up a claim to your property, and that you declared you'd not live in the house, nor draw a shilling from the estate, till you were well assured it was your own beyond dispute, my answer was, 'No son of old Montagu Bramleigh ever said that. Whatever you may say of that family, they're no fools.'"

"And is it with fools you would class the man who reasoned in this fashion?" said Augustus, who tried to smile and seem indifferent as he spoke.

"First of all, it's not reasoning at all; the man who began to doubt whether he had a valid right to what he possessed might doubt whether he had a right to his own name,—whether his wife was his own, and what not. Don't you see where all this would lead to? If I have to report whether a new line is safe and fit to be opened for public traffic, I don't sink shafts down to see if some hundred fathoms below there might be an extinct volcano, or a stratum of unsound pudding-stone. I only want to know that the rails will carry so many tons of merchandise. Do you see my point?—do you take me, Bramleigh?"

"Mr. Cutbill," said Augustus slowly, "on matters such as these you have just alluded to, there is no man's opinion I should prefer to yours, but there are other questions on which I would rather rely upon my own judgment. May I beg, therefore, that we should turn to some other topic."

"It's true then,—the report was well founded?" cried Cutbill, staring in wide astonishment at the other's face.

"And if it were, sir," replied Bramleigh haughtily, "what then?"

"What then? Simply that you'd be the—no matter what. Your father was very angry with me one night, because I said something of the same kind to him." And as he spoke he pushed his glass impatiently from him, and looked ineffably annoyed and disgusted.

"Will you not take more wine, Mr. Cutbill?" said Augustus, blandly, and without the faintest sign of irritation.

"No, not a drop. I'm sorry I've taken so much., I began by filling

my glass whenever I saw the decanter near me,—thinking, like a confounded fool as I was, we were in for a quiet confidential talk, and knowing that I was just the sort of fellow a man of your own stamp needs and requires ; a fellow who does nothing from the claims of a class—do you understand ?—nothing because he mixes with a certain set and dines at a certain club ; but acts independent of all extraneous pressure,—a bit of masonry, Bramleigh, that wants no buttress. Can you follow me, eh ?"

" I believe I can appreciate the strength of such a character as you describe."

" No, you can't, not a bit of it. Some flighty fool that would tell you what a fine creature you were, how great-hearted—that's the cant, great-hearted !—would have far more of your esteem and admiration than Tom Cutbill, with his keen knowledge of life and his thorough insight into men and manners."

" You are unjust to each of us," said Bramleigh, quietly.

" Well, let us have done with it. I'll go and ask Miss Ellen for a cup of tea, and then I'll take my leave. I'm sure I wish I'd never have come here. It's enough to provoke a better temper than mine. And now let me just ask you, out of mere curiosity,—for of course I mustn't presume to feel more,—but just out of curiosity let me ask you, do you know an art or an industry, a trade or a calling, that would bring you in fifty pounds a year ? Do you see your way to earning the rent of a lodging even as modest as this ?"

" That is exactly one of the points on which your advice would be very valuable to me, Mr. Cutbill."

" Nothing of the kind. I could no more tell a man of your stamp how to gain his livelihood than I could make a tunnel with a corkscrew. I know your theory well enough. I've heard it announced a thousand times and more. Every fellow with a silk lining to his coat and a taste for fancy jewellery imagines he has only to go to Australia to make a fortune ; that when he has done with Bond Street he can take to the bush. Isn't that it, Bramleigh—eh ? You fancy you're up to roughing it and hard work because you have walked four hours through the stubble after the partridges, or sat a ' sharp thing ' across country in a red coat ! Heaven help you ! It isn't with five courses and finger-glasses a man finishes his day at Warra-Warra."

" I assure you, Mr. Cutbill, as regards my own case, I neither take a high estimate of my own capacity nor a low one of the difficulty of earning a living."

" Humility never paid a butcher's bill, any more than conceit !" retorted the inexorable Cutbill, who seemed bent on opposing everything. " Have you thought of nothing you could do ? for, if you're utterly incapable, there's nothing for you but the public service."

" Perhaps that is the career would best suit me," said Bramleigh, smiling ; and I have already written to bespeak the kind influence of an old friend of my father's on my behalf."

" Who is he ? "

"Sir Francis Deighton."

"The greatest humbug in the Government! He trades on being the most popular man of his day, because he never refused anything to anybody—so far as a promise went; but it's well known that he never gave anything out of his own connections. Don't depend on Sir Francis, Bramleigh, whatever you do."

"That is sorry comfort you give me."

"Don't you know any women?"

"Women—women? I know several."

"I mean women of fashion. Those meddlesome women that are always dabbling in politics and the Stock Exchange,—very deep where you think they know nothing, and perfectly ignorant about what they pretend to know best. They're two-thirds of the patronage of every Government in England. You may laugh; but it's true."

"Come, Mr. Cutbill, if you'll not take more wine we'll join my sister," said Bramleigh, with a faint smile.

"Get them to make you a Commissioner—it doesn't matter of what—Woods and Forests—Bankruptcy—Lunacy—anything; it's always two thousand a year, and little to do for it. And if you can't be a Commissioner be an Inspector, and then you have your travelling-expenses;" and Cutbill winked knowingly as he spoke and sauntered away to the drawing-room.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE APPOINTMENT.

"WHAT will Mr. Cutbill say now?" cried Ellen, as she stood leaning on her brother's shoulder while he read a letter marked "On her Majesty's Service," and sealed with a prodigious extravagance of wax. It ran thus:—

"Sir,

Downing Street, Sept. 10th.

"I HAVE received instructions from Sir Francis Deighton, her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, to acknowledge your letter of the 9th instant; and while expressing his regret that he has not at this moment any post in his department which he could offer for your acceptance, to state that her Majesty's Secretary for Foreign Affairs will consent to appoint you consul at Cattaro, full details of which post, duties, salary, &c. will be communicated to you in the official despatch from the Foreign Office.

"Sir Francis Deighton is most happy to have been the means through which the son of an old friend has been introduced into the service of the Crown.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your obedient Servant,

"GARY EGERTON D'EVNCOURT,

"Private Secretary."

"What will he say now, Gusty?" said she, triumphantly.

"He will probably say, 'What's it worth?' Nelly. 'How much is the income?'"

"I suppose he will. I take it he will measure a friend's good feeling towards us by the scale of an official salary, as if two or three hundred a year more or less could affect the gratitude we must feel towards a real patron."

A slight twinge of pain seemed to move Bramleigh's mouth; but he grew calm in a moment, and merely said, "We must wait till we hear more."

"But your mind is at ease, Gusty? Tell me that your anxieties are all allayed?" cried she eagerly.

"Yes; in so far that I have got something—that I have not met a cold refusal."

"Oh, don't take it that way," broke she in, looking at him with a half-reproachful expression. "Do not, I beseech you, let Mr. Cutbill's spirit influence you. Be hopeful and trustful, as you always were."

"I'll try," said he, passing his arm round her and smiling affectionately at her.

"I hope he has gone, Gusty. I do hope we shall not see him again. He is so terribly hard in his judgments, so merciless in the way he sentences people who merely think differently from himself. After hearing him talk for an hour or so, I always go away with the thought that if the world be only half as bad as he says it is, it's little worth living in."

"Well, he will go to-morrow, or Thursday at farthest; and I won't pretend I shall regret him. He is occasionally too candid."

"His candour is simply rudeness; frankness is very well for a friend, but he was never in the position to use this freedom. Only think of what he said to me yesterday: he said that as it was not unlikely I should have to turn governess or companion, the first thing I should do would be to change my name. 'They,' he remarked—but I don't well know whom he exactly meant—'they don't like broken-down gentlefolk. They suspect them of this, that, and the other;' and he suggested I should call myself Miss Cutbill. Did you ever hear impertinence equal to that?"

"But it may have been kindly-intentioned, Nelly. I have no doubt he meant to do a good-natured thing."

"Save me from good nature that is not allied with good manners, then," said she, growing crimson as she spoke. "

"I have not escaped scot-free, I assure you," said he, smiling; "but it seems to me a man really never knows what the world thinks of him till he has gone through the ordeal of broken fortune. By the way, where is Cattaro? the name sounds Italian."

"I assumed it to be in Italy somewhere, but I can't tell you why."

Bramleigh took down his atlas, and pored patiently over Italy and her outlying islands for a long time, but in vain. Nelly, too, aided him in his

search, but to no purpose. While they were still bending over the map, Cutbill entered with a large despatch-shaped letter in his hand.

"The Queen's messenger has just handed me that for you, Bramleigh. I hope it's good news."

Bramleigh opened and read :—

" Sir,

" Foreign Office.

" I HAVE had much pleasure in submitting your name to her Majesty for the appointment of consul at Cattaro, where your salary will be two hundred pounds a year, and twenty pounds for office expenses. You will repair to your post without unnecessary delay, and report your arrival to this department.

" I am, &c. &c.

" BIDDESWORTH."

" Two hundred a year! Fifty less than we gave our cook!" said Bramleigh, with a faint smile.

" It is an insult, an outrage," said Nelly, whose face and neck glowed till they appeared crimson. " I hope, Gusty, you'll have the firmness to reject such an offer."

" What does Mr. Cutbill say?" asked he, turning towards him.

" Mr. Cutbill says that if you're bent on playing Don Quixote, and won't go back and enjoy what's your own, like a sensible man, this pittance—it ain't more—is better than trying to eke out life by your little talents."

Nelly turned her large eyes, open to the widest, upon him, as he spoke, with an expression so palpably that of rebuke for his freedom, that he replied to her stare by saying,

" Of course I am very free and easy. More than that, I'm downright rude. That's what you mean—a vulgar deg! but don't you see that's what diminished fortune must bring you to? You'll have to live with vulgar dogs. It's not only coarse cookery, but coarse company a man comes to. Ay, and there are people will tell you that both are useful—as alter-ātives, as the doctors call them."

It was a happy accident that made him lengthen out the third syllable of the word, which amused Nelly so much that she laughed outright.

" Can you tell us where is Cattaro, Mr. Cutbill?" asked Bramleigh, eager that the other should not notice his sister's laughter.

" I haven't the faintest notion; but Bolland, the messenger, is eating his luncheon at the station: I'll run down and ask him." And without waiting for a reply, he seized his hat and hurried away.

" One must own he is good-natured," said Nelly, " but he does make us pay somewhat smartly for it. His wholesome truths are occasionally hard to swallow."

" As he told us, Nelly, we must accept these things as part of our changed condition. Poverty wouldn't be such a hard thing to bear if it

only meant common food and coarse clothing; but it implies scores of things that are far less endurable."

While they thus talked, Cutbill had hurried down to the station, and just caught the messenger as he was taking his seat in the train. Two others—one bound for Russia and one for Greece—were already seated in the compartment, smoking their cigars with an air of quiet indolence, like men making a trip by a river steamer.

"I say, Bolland," cried Cutbill, "where is Cattaro?"

"Don't know; is he a tenor?"

"It's a place; a consulate somewhere or other."

"Never heard of it. Have you, Digby?"

"It sounds like Calabria, or farther south."

"I know it," said the third man. "It's a vile hole; it's on the eastern shore of the Adriatic. I was wrecked there once in an Austrian Lloyd's steamer, and caught a tertian fever before I could get away. There was a fellow there, a vice-consul they called him: he was dressed in sheepskins, and, I believe, lived by wrecking. He stole my watch, and would have carried away my portmanteau, but I was waiting for him with my revolver and winged him."

"Did nothing come of it?" asked another.

"They pensioned him, I think. I'm not sure; but I think they gave him twenty pounds a year. I know old Kepsley stopped eight pounds out of my salary for a wooden leg for the rascal. There's the whistle; take care, sir, you'll come to grief if you hang on."

Cutbill attended to the admonition, and bidding the travellers good-by, returned slowly to the Bramleighs' lodgings, pondering over all he had heard, and canvassing with himself how much of his unpleasant tidings he would venture to relate.

"Where's your map," said he, entering. "I suspect I can make out the place now. Show me the Adriatic. Zara—Lissa,—what a number of islands.—Here you are, here's Bocca di Cattaro—next door to the Turks, by Jove."

"My dear Gusty, don't think of this, I beseech you," said Nelly, whispering. "It is enough to see where it is, to know it must be utter barbarism."

"I won't say it looks inviting," said Cutbill, as he bent over the map, "and the messenger hadn't much to say in its praise either."

"Probably not; but remember what you told me a while ago, Mr. Cutbill, that even this was better than depending on my little talents."

"He holds little talents in light esteem then?" said Ellen, tartly.

"That's exactly what I do," rejoined Cutbill, quickly. "As long as you are rich enough to be courted for your wealth, your little talents will find plenty of admirers; but as to earning your bread by them, you might as well try to go round the Cape in an outrigger. Take it by all means,—take it, if it is only to teach you what it is to earn your own dinner."

"And is my sister to face such a life as this?"

"Your sister has courage for everything—but leaving you," said she, throwing her arm on his shoulder.

"I must be off. I have only half-an-hour left to pack my portmanteau and be at the station. One word with you alone, Bramleigh," said he in a low tone, and Augustus walked at once into the adjoining room.

"You want some of these, I'm certain," said Cutbill, as he drew forth a roll of crushed and crumpled bank-notes, and pressed them into Bramleigh's hand. "You'll pay them back at your own time; don't look so stiff, man; it's only a loan."

"I assure you, if I look stiff, it's not what I feel. I'm overwhelmed by your good-nature; but, believe me, I'm in no want of money."

"Nobody ever is; but it's useful all the same. Take them to oblige me; take them just to show you're not such a swell as won't accept even the smallest service from a fellow like me—do now, do!" and he looked so pleadingly that it was not easy to refuse him.

"I'm very proud to think I have won such friendship; but I give you my word, I have ample means for all that I shall need to do; and if I should not, I'll ask you to help me."

"Good-by then. Good-by, Miss Ellen," cried he aloud. "It's not *my* fault that I'm not a favourite with you;" and thus saying, he snatched his hat, and was down the stairs and out of the house before Bramleigh could utter a word.

"What a kind-hearted fellow it is," said he, as he joined his sister. "I must tell you what he called me aside for."

She listened quietly while he recounted what had just occurred, and then said,

"The Gospel tells us it's hard for rich men to get to heaven; but it's scarcely less hard for them to see what there is good here below! So long as we were well off I could see nothing to like in that man."

"That was my own thought a few minutes back; so you see, Nelly, we are not only travelling the same road, but gaining the same experiences."

"Sedley says in this letter here," said Augustus the next morning as he entered the breakfast-room, "that Pracontal's lawyer is perfectly satisfied with the honesty of our intentions, and we shall go to trial in the November term on the ejectment case. It will raise the whole question, and the law shall decide between us."

"And what becomes of that—that arrangement," said she, hesitatingly, "by which M. Pracontal consented to withdraw his claim?"

"It was made against my consent, and I have refused to adhere to it. I have told Sedley so, and told him that I shall hold him responsible to the amount disbursed."

"But, dear Gusty, remember how much to your advantage that settlement would have been."

"I only remember the shame I felt on hearing of it, and my sorrow that Sedley should have thought my acceptance of it possible."

"But how has M. Pracontal taken this money and gone on with his suit?—surely both courses are not open to him?"

"I can tell you nothing about M. Pracontal. I only know that he, as well as myself, would seem to be strangely served by our respective lawyers, who assume to deal for us, whether we will or not."

"I still cling to the wish that the matter had been left to Mr. Sedley."

"You must not say so, Nelly; you must never tell me you would wish I had been a party to my own dishonour. Either Pracontal or I own this estate: no compromise could be possible without a stain to each of us, and for my own part I will neither resist a just claim nor give way to an unfair demand. Let us talk of this no more.",

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

WITH LORD CULDUFF.

In a room of a Roman palace large enough to be a church, but furnished with all the luxury of an English drawing-room, stood Lord Culduff, with his back to an ample fire, smoking a cigarette; a small table beside him supported a very diminutive coffee-service of chased silver, and in a deep-cushioned chair at the opposite side of the fireplace lay a toy terrier, asleep.

There were two fireplaces in the spacious chamber, and at a writing-table drawn close to the second of these sat Temple Bramleigh writing. His pen as it ran rapidly along was the only sound in the perfect stillness, till Lord Culduff, throwing the end of his cigarette away, said, "It is not easy to imagine so great an idiot as your worthy brother Augustus."

"A little selfishness would certainly not dis-improve him," said Temple, deferentially.

"Say sense, common sense, sir; a very little of that humble ingredient that keeps a man from walking into a well."

"I think you judge him hardly."

"Judge him hardly! Why, sir, what judgment can equal the man's own condemnation of himself? He has some doubts—some very vague doubts—about his right to his estate, and straightway he goes and throws it into a law-court. He prefers, in fact, that his inheritance should be eaten up by lawyers than quietly enjoyed by his own family. Such men are usually provided with lodgings at Hanwell; their friends hide their razors, and don't trust them with penknives."

"Oh, this is too much: he may take an extreme view of what his duty is in this matter, but he's certainly no more mad than I am."

"I repeat, sir, that the man who takes conscience for his guide in the very complicated concerns of life is unfit to manage his affairs. Conscience is a constitutional peculiarity, nothing more. To attempt to subject the

business of life to conscience would be about as absurd as to regulate the funds by the state of the barometer."

"I'll not defend what he is doing—I'm as sorry for it as any one; I only protest against his being thought a fool."

"What do you say then to this last step of his, if it be indeed true that he has accepted this post?"

"I'm afraid it is; my sister Ellen says they are on their way to Cattaro."

"I declare that I regard it as an outrage. I can give it no other name. It is an outrage. What, sir, am I, who have reached the highest rank of my career, or something very close to it; who have obtained my Grand Cross; who stand, as I feel I do, second to none in the public service;—am I to have my brother-in-law, my wife's brother, gazetted to a post I might have flung to my valet!"

"There I admit he was wrong."

"That is to say, sir, that you feel the personal injury his indiscreet conduct has inflicted. You see your own ruin in his rashness."

"I can't suppose it will go that far."

"And why not, pray? When a Minister or Secretary of State dares to offend me—for it is levelled at *me*—by appointing my brother to such an office, he says as plainly as words can speak, 'Your sun is set; your influence is gone. We place you below the salt to-day, that to-morrow we may put you outside the door.' You cannot be supposed to know these things, but *I* know them. Shall I give you a counsel, sir?"

"Any advice from you, my lord, is always acceptable."

"Give up the line. Retire;—be a gamekeeper, a billiard-marker; turn steward of a steamer, or correspond for one of the penny papers, but don't attempt to serve a country that pays its gentlemen like toll-keepers."

Temple seemed to regard this little outburst as such an ordinary event that he dipped his pen into the ink-bottle, and was about to resume writing, when Lord Culduff said, in a sharp, peevish tone,—

"I trust your brother and sister do not mean to come to Rome?"

"I believe they do, my lord. I think they have promised to pay the L'Estranges a visit at Albano."

"My lady must write at once and prevent it. This cannot possibly be permitted. Where are they now?"

"At Como. This last letter was dated from the inn at that place."

Lord Culduff rang the bell, and directed the servant to ask if her ladyship had gone out.

The servant returned to say that her ladyship was going to dress, but would see his lordship on her way downstairs.

"Whose card is this? Where did this come from?" asked Lord Culduff, as he petulantly turned it round and round, trying to read the name.

"Oh, that's Mr. Cribbill. He called twice yesterday. I can't imagine what has brought him to Rome."

"Perhaps I might hazard a guess," said Lord Culduff, with a grim smile. "But I'll not see him. You'll say, Bramleigh, that I am very much engaged ; that I have a press of most important business ; that the Cardinal Secretary is always here. Say anything, in short, that will mean No, Cutbill !"

"He's below at this moment."

"Then get rid of him ! My dear fellow, the A B C of your craft is to dismiss the importunate. Go, and send him off !"

Lord Culduff turned to caress his whiskers as the other left the room ; and having gracefully disposed a very youthful curl of his wig upon his forehead, was smiling a pleasant recognition of himself in the glass, when voices in a louder tone than were wont to be heard in such sacred precincts startled him. He listened, and suddenly the door was opened rudely, and Mr. Cutbill entered, Temple Bramleigh falling back as the other came forward, and closing the door behind.

"So, my lord, I was to be told you'd not see me, eh ?" said Cutbill, his face slightly flushed by a late altercation.

"I trusted, sir, when my private secretary had told you I was engaged, that I might have counted upon not being broken in upon."

"There you were wrong, then," said Cutbill, who divested himself of an overcoat, threw it on the back of a chair, and came forward towards the fire. "Quite wrong. A man doesn't come a thousand and odd miles to be 'not-at-homed' at the end of it."

"Which means, sir, that I am positively reduced to the necessity of receiving you, whether I will or not ?"

"Something near that, but not exactly. You see, my lord, that when to my application to your lawyer in town I received for answer the invariable rejoinder, 'It is only my lord himself can reply to this ; his lordship alone knows what this, that, or t'other refers to,' I knew pretty well the intention was to choke me off. It was saying to me, Is it worth a journey to Rome to ask this question ? and my reply to myself was, Yes, Tom Cutbill, go to Rome by all means. And here I am..."

"So I perceive, sir," said the other dryly and gravely.

"Now, my lord, there are two ways of transacting business. One may do the thing pleasantly, with a disposition to make matters easy and comfortable ; or one may approach everything with a determination to screw one's last farthing out of it ; to squeeze the lemon to the last drop. Which of these is it your pleasure we should choose ?"

"I must endeavour to imitate, though I cannot rival your frankness, sir ; and therefore I would say, let us have that mode in which we shall see least of each other."

"All right. I am completely in your lordship's hands. You had your choice, and I don't dispute it. There, then, is my account. It's a trifle under fourteen hundred pounds. Your lordship's generosity will make it the fourteen, I've no doubt. All the secret-service part—that trip to town and the dinner at Greenwich—I've left blank. Fill it up as your con-

science suggests. The Irish expenses are also low, as I lived a good deal at Bishop's Folly. I also make no charge for keeping you out of *Punch*. It wasn't easy, all the same, for the fellows had you, wig and all. In fact, my lord, it's a friendly document, though your present disposition doesn't exactly seem to respond to that line of action; but Tom Cutbill is a forgiving soul. Your lordship will look over this document, then; and in a couple of days—no hurry, you know, for I have lots to see here—in a couple of days I'll drop in, and talk the thing over with you; for you see there are two or three points,—about the way you behaved to your brother-in-law, and such like,—that I'd like to chat a little with you about."

As Lord Culduff listened his face grew redder and redder, and his fingers played with the back of the chair on which he leaned with a quick, convulsive motion; and as the other went on he drew from time to time long, deep inspirations, as if invoking patience to carry him through the infliction. At last he said, in a half-faint voice, "Have you done, sir—is it over?"

"Well, pretty nigh. I'd like to have asked you about my lady. I know she had a temper of her own before you married her, and I'm rather curious to hear how you hit it off together. Does she give in—eh? Has the high and mighty dodge subdued her? I thought it would."

"Do me the great favour, sir, to ring that bell and to leave me. I am not very well," said Culduff, gasping for breath.

"I see that. I see you've got the blood to your head. When a man comes to your time of life, he must mind what he eats, and stick to pint bottles too. That's true as the Bible—pint bottles and plenty of Seltzer when you're amongst the seventies." And with this aphorism he drew on his coat, buttoned it leisurely to the collar, and with a familiar nod left the room.

"Giacomo," said Lord Culduff, "that man is not to be admitted again on any pretext. Tell the porter it is his place will pay for it, if he passes the grille."

Giacomo bowed silent acquiescence, and Lord Culduff lay back on a sofa and said, "Tell Doctor Pritchard to come here, tell my lady, tell Mr. Temple, I feel very ill," and so saying he closed his eyes and seemed overcome.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

AT ALBANO.

"Who do you think asks himself to dine with us to-day, Julia?" said L'Estrange to his sister on the day of the scene recorded in our last chapter.

"I cannot guess; but I am prepared to say I'll be glad to see any one."

"It is very dull for you, indeed," said he, compassionately.

"No, George, not that. Not half so bad for *me* as for you ; but somehow I felt it would be a relief to have a guest, who would oblige us to drop our grumblings and exert ourselves to talk of something besides our own personal worries. Now, who is it ? "

"What would you say to Mr. Cutbill ? "

"Do you mean the engineering man we saw at Castello ? "

"The same."

"Oh, dear ! I retract. I recall my last speech, and avow, in all humility, I was wrong. All I remember of that man—not much certainly—but all I do remember of him was that he was odious."

"He was amusing, in his way."

"Probably—but I detested 'his way.' "

"The Bramleighs said he was good-natured."

"With all my heart. Give him all the excellent qualities you like ; but he will still remain insufferably ill-bred and coarse-minded. Why did you ask him, George ? "

"I didn't ; he asked himself. Here's his note : 'Dear L'Estrange'—familiar enough—'Dear L'Estrange,—I have just arrived here, and want to have some talk with you. I mean, therefore, to ask you to let me take a bit of dinner with you to-day. I shall be out by five or half-past. Don't make a stranger of me, but give me the cold mutton or whatever it is.—Yours, Tom CUTBILL.' "

"What a type of the writer ! "

"Well ; but what can we get for dinner, Ju ? "

"The cold mutton, I think. I'm sure the gentleman's estimate of his value as a guest cannot be too low."

"No, Julia, let us treat him to our best. He means kindly by coming out here to see us."

"I'd have taken the will for the deed with more of gratitude. Oh, George," cried she with fervour, "why will you be always so much obliged to the man who condescends to eat your salt ? This Mr. Cutbill will be your patron for the next twenty-four hours."

"Certainly the man who dines with us cannot come for the excellence of our fare."

"That is a very ingenious bit of self-flattery ; but don't trust it, George. Men eat bad dinners continually ; and there is a sort of condescension in eating them at a friend's house, which is often mistaken for good-nature ; and the fun of it is that the men who do these things are very vain of the act."

L'Estrange gave a little shrug of his shoulders. It was his usual reply to those subtleties which his sister was so fond of, and that he was never very sure whether they were meant to puzzle or to persuade him.

"So then he is to be our honoured guest, George, eh ? "

He smiled a gentle assent, and she went on : "And we are to treat him to that wonderful Rhine wine Sir Marcus sent you to cure your

ague." And the very thought of drinking anything so costly, actually brought on a shivering attack.

"Have we any of it left?"

"Two bottles, if those uncouth little flattened flasks can be called bottles. And since you are resolved he is to be entertained like a 'Prince Russe,' I'll actually treat him to a dish of maccaroni of my own invention. You remember, George, Mrs. Monkton was going to withdraw her subscription from the Church when she ate of it, and remained a firm Protestant."

"Julia, Julia!" said he in a half-reproving tone.

"I am simply citing an historical fact, but you'll provoke me to say much worse if you stand there with that censorial face. As if I didn't know how wrong it was to speak lightly of a lady who subscribes two hundred francs a year."

"There are very few who do so," said he with a sigh.

"My poor brother," said she caressingly, "it is a very hard case to be so poor, and we with such refined tastes and such really nice instincts; we who would like a pretty house, and a pretty garden, and a pretty little equipage, and who would give pretty little dinners, with the very neatest table equipage, and be, all the time, so cultivated and so simple, so elevated in tone and so humble in spirit. There, go away, and look after some fruit—do something, and don't stand there provoking me to talk nonsense. That solemn look made me ten times more silly than I ever intended to be."

"I'm sure," said L'Estrange, thoughtfully, "he has something to tell me of the coal-mine."

"Ah, if I thought that, George? If I thought he brought us tidings of a great 'dividend'—isn't that the name for the thing the people always share amongst themselves, out of somebody else's money? So I have shocked you, at last, into running away; and now for the cares of household."

Now though she liked to quiz her brother about his love of hospitality and the almost reckless way in which he would spend money to entertain a guest, it was one of her especial delights to play hostess, and receive guests with whatever display their narrow fortune permitted. Nor did she spare any pains she could bestow in preparing to welcome Mr. Cutbill, and her day was busily passed between the kitchen, the garden, and the drawing-room, ordering, aiding, and devising with a zeal and activity that one might have supposed could only have been evoked in the service of a much honoured guest.

"Look at my table, George," said she, "before you go to dress for dinner, and say if you ever saw anything more tasteful. There's a bouquet for you; and see how gracefully I have twined the grape-leaves round these flasks. You'll fancy yourself Horace entertaining Mecenas. Mr. Cutbill is certainly not very like him,—but no matter. Nor is our little Monte Oliveto, exactly Falernian."

"It is quite beautiful, Ju, all of it," said he, drawing her towards him and kissing her; but there was a touch of sadness in his voice, as in his look, to which she replied with a merry laugh, and said,—

"Say it out boldly, George, do; say frankly what a sin and a shame it is, that such a dear good girl should have to strain her wits in this hand-to-hand fight with Poverty, and not be embellishing some splendid station with her charming talents, and such like."

"I was thinking something not very far from it," said he smiling.

"Of course you were; but you never thought, perhaps, how soon ennui and lassitude might have taken the place of all my present energy. I want to please you now, George, since without me you would be desolate; but if we were rich, you'd not depend on me, and I'd have been very dispirited and very sad. There now, that's quite enough of sentimentalizing for once. I'm off to dress. Do you know," said she, as she mounted the stairs, "I have serious thoughts of captivating Mr. Cutbill?"

"Oh, Julia, I entreat—" but she was gone ere he could finish, and her merry laughter was heard till her door closed.

Poor girl, her light-heartedness died out as she felt herself alone, and turning towards a little photograph of a man in a naval uniform, that hung over the chimney, her eyes grew dim with tears as she gazed on it.

"Ay," said she, bitterly, "and this same humour it was that lost me the truest heart that ever beat! What would I not give now to know that he still remembered me—remembered me with kindness!"

She sat down, with her face buried in her hands, nor stirred till the sound of voices beneath apprised her that their guest had arrived.

While she was yet standing before her glass, and trying to efface the traces of sorrow on her features, George tapped softly at her door. "May I come in?" cried he. "Oh, Julia," said he, as he drew nigh, "it is worse than I had even suspected. Cutbill tells me that——"

He could not go on, but, bending his head on her shoulder, sobbed hysterically.

"George, George, do not give way thus," said she, calmly. "What is it has happened? What has he told you?"

"The mine—the Lisconnor scheme—is bankrupt."

"Is that all?"

"All! Why it is ruin—utter ruin! Every shilling that you had in the world is gone, and I have done it all." And once more his feelings overcame him, and he sobbed convulsively.

"But, my dear, dear brother," said she fondly, "if it's lost it's lost, and there's no help for it; and let us never fret over what binds us only the closer together. You can't get rid of me now, for I declare, George, no earthly consideration will make me accept Mr. Cutbill."

"Oh, how can you jest this way, Julia, at such a moment!"

"I assure you I am most serious. I know that man intends to propose to me, and you are just in the humour to mix up our present misfortunes

and his pretensions, and actually espouse his cause ; but it's no use, George, no use whatever. I'll not consent. Go downstairs now. Stay, let me wipe those red eyes. Don't let that man see any trace of this sorrow about you ; bear up quietly and well. You shall see that I do not give counsel without being able to show example. Go down now, and I'll follow you."

As he left the room she sat down, and accidentally so as to see her face in the glass. The forced smile which she had put on was only slowly vanishing from her features, and she was shocked at the pallor that now succeeded.

"I *am* looking very ill," muttered she. "There's no denying it. That man will certainly see how this news has struck me down, and I would not that he should witness my want of courage. I wish I had—no, I don't. I'd not put on rouge if I had it; but I wish we were alone to-day, and could talk over our fortune together. Perhaps it's as well as it is." And now she arose and descended the stairs hastily, as though not to give herself time for further thought.

Cuthill was in the act of cautioning L'Estrange against speaking of the Lisconnor misfortune to his sister when she entered the room. "Do you forget me, Miss L'Estrange," said he, coming forward, "or am I to remind you that we met in Ireland ?"

"Forget you, Mr. Cuthill," replied she, laughingly; "how can I forget the charming tenor who sang second to me, or the gallant cavalier who rode out with me ?"

"Ay, but I got a roll in a duck-pond that day," said he, grimly. "You persuaded me to let the beast drink, and he lay down in the water and nearly squashed me."

"Oh, you almost killed me with laughter. I had to hold on by the crutch of my saddle to save myself from falling into the pond."

"And I hear you made a sketch of me."

"Have you not seen it ? I declare I thought I had shown it to you ; but I will after dinner, if I can find it."

The dinner was announced at this moment, and they proceeded to the dining-room.

"Taste is everything," said Cuthill, as he unfolded his napkin, and surveyed the table, decked out with fruit and flowers with a degree of artistic elegance that appealed even to him. "Taste is everything. I declare to you that Howell and James would pay fifty pounds down just for that urn as it stands there. How you twined those lilies around it in that way is quite beyond me."

As the dinner went on he was in ecstasy with everything.

"Don't part with your cook, even after they make a bishop of you," said he. "I don't know the French name of that dish, but I believe it's a stewed hare. Might I send my plate twice ?"

"Mr. Cuthill saw the Bramleighs at Como, Julia," said L'Estrange, to take him, if possible, off the subject of the entertainment.

"I did, indeed. I met them at that very hotel that was once Queen Caroline's house. There they were diverting themselves,—boating and going about just as if the world had gone all right with them; and Bramleigh told me one morning, that he had cashed the last cheque for fifty pounds."

"And is he really determined to touch nothing of his property till the law assures him that his right is undeniable?"

"Worse than that, far worse; he has quarrelled with old Sedley, his father's law-agent for forty years, and threatened him with an action for having entered into a compromise without instructions or permission; and he is wrong, clearly wrong, for I saw the correspondence, and if it goes before a jury, they'll say at once that there was consent."

"Had he then forgotten it?" asked Julia.

"No, he neither forgets nor remembers; but he has a sort of flighty way of getting himself into a white heat of enthusiasm; and though he cools down occasionally into a little common sense, it doesn't last; he rushes back into his heroics, and raves about saving him from himself, rescuing him from the ignoble temptation of self-interest, and such like balderdash."

"There must be a great deal of true nobility in such a nature," said Julia.

"I'll tell you what there is; and it runs through them all except the eldest daughter, and that puppy the diplomatist,—there's madness!"

"Madness?"

"Well, I call it madness. Suppose now I was to decline taking another glass of that wine—Steinheimer I think it's called—till I saw your brother's receipt for the payment of it, wouldn't you say I was either mad or something very near it?"

"I don't see the parity between the two cases," said Julia.

"Ah, you're too sharp for me, Miss Julia, too sharp; but I'm right all the same. Isn't Jack Bramleigh mad? Is it anything but madness for a man to throw up his commission and go and serve as a sailor,—before the mast or behind it, I don't care which; but isn't that madness?"

Julia felt a sense of sickness almost to fainting, but she never spoke nor stirred, while George, quickly noticing her state, turned towards Cutbill and said,—

"What news have you of him? he was a great favourite of mine."

"Of yours and of everybody's," said Cutbill. And now the colour rushed back to Julia's cheek, and had Cutbill but looked towards her, it is very probable he would greatly have misconstrued the smile she gave him. "I wish I had news of him; but for these last few months I have none. When he got out to China he found that great house, Alcock and Baines, smashed—all the tea-merchants were smashed—and they tell me that he shipped with a Yankee for Constantinople."

"You heard from him, then?"

"No; he never writes to any one. He may send you a newspaper, or

a piece of one, to show where he is ; but he says he never was able to say what was in his head, and he always found he was writing things out of the ' Complete Correspondent.' "

" Poor Jack ! "

" Shall I go and look after your coffee, George ? You say you like me to make it myself," said Julia ; and she arose and left the room almost before he could reply.

" You'll never marry while she's your housekeeper, I see that," said Cutbill, as the door closed after her.

" She is my greatest comfort in life," said the other warmly.

" I see it all ; and the whole time of dinner I was thinking what a pity it was—— No matter, I'll not say what I was going to say. I'm glad you haven't told her of the smash till I see what I can do with the old viscount."

" But I have told her ; she knows it all."

" And do you tell me she had that heavy load on her heart all the time she was talking and laughing there ? "

L'Estrange nodded.

" It's only women bear up that way. Take my word for it, if it had been one of us, he'd not have come down to dinner, he'd not have had pluck to show himself. There's where they beat us, sir,—that's real courage."

" You are not taking your wine," said L'Estrange, seeing him pass the bottle.

" No ; I want my head clear this evening, I want to be cool and collected. I'll not drink any more. Tell me about yourself a little ; how do you get on here ? do you like the place ? do you like the people ? "

" The place is charming ; we like it better every day we live in it."

" And the people—the English I mean ; what of them ? "

" They mean kindly enough, indeed they are often very kind ; but they do not live in much harmony, and they only agree in one thing——"

" I know what that is. They all join to worry the parson—of course they do. Did you ever live in a lodging-house, L'Estrange ? If you did, you must have seen how the whole population coalesced to torment the maid-of-all-work. She belonged to them all, collectively and individually. And so it is with you. You are the maid-of-all-work. You have to make Brown's bed, and black Robinson's boots—spiritually I mean—and none recognizes the claim of his neighbour, each believes you belong to himself. That's the voluntary system, as they call it ; and a quicker way to drive a man mad was never invented."

" Perhaps you take an extreme view of it—" began L'Estrange.

" No, I don't," interrupted the other. " I've only to look at your face, and instead of the fresh cheeks and the clear bright eyes I remember when I saw you first, I see you now anxious and pale and nervous. Where's the pluck that enabled you to ride at a five-foot wall ? Do you think you could do it now ? "

"Very likely not. Very likely it is all the better I should not."

"You'll not get me to believe that. No man's nature was ever bettered for being bullied."

L'Estrange laughed heartily, not in the least degree angered by the other's somewhat coarse candour.

"It's a queer world altogether; but maybe if each of us was doing the exact thing he was fit for, life wouldn't be half as good a thing as it is. The whole thing would be like a piece of machinery, and instead of the hitches and makeshifts that we see now, and that bring out men's qualities and test their natures, we'd have nothing but a big workshop, where each did his own share of the work, and neither asked aid nor gave it. Do you permit a cigar?"

"Of course; but I've nothing worth offering you."

"I have though," said he, producing his case and drawing forth a cheroot, and examining it with that keen scrutiny and that seeming fore-taste of enjoyment peculiar to smokers. "Try that, and tell me when you tasted the equal of it. Ah, L'Estrange, we must see and get you out of this. It's not a place for you. A nice little vicarage in Hants or Herts, a sunny glebe, with a comfortable house and a wife; later on, a wife of course, for your sister won't stay with you always."

"You've drawn a pleasant picture—only to rub it out again."

"Miss Julia has got a bad headache, sir," said the maid, entering at this moment, "and begs you to excuse her. Will you please to have coffee here or in the drawing-room?"

"Ay, here," said Cutbill, answering the look with which the other seemed to interrogate him. "She couldn't stand it any longer, and no wonder; but I'll not keep you away from her now. Go up and say, I'll see Lord Culduff in the morning, and if I have any news worth reporting, I'll come out here in the afternoon."

Vesuvius.

THE eruption in progress, as we write, from Mount Vesuvius, and the numerous and violent eruptions from this mountain during the two last centuries, seem to afford an answer to those who would see traces of a gradually diminishing activity in the earth's internal forces. That such a diminution is taking place we may admit, but that its rate of progress is perceptible—that we can point to a time within the historical epoch, nay even within the limits of geological evidence, at which the earth's internal forces were *certainly* more active than they are at the present time, may, we think, be denied absolutely.

When the science of geology was but young, and its professors sought to compress within a few years (at the outside) a series of events which (we now know) must have occupied many centuries, there was room, indeed, for the supposition that modern volcanic eruptions, as compared with ancient outbursts, are but as the efforts of children compared with the work of giants. And, accordingly, we find a distinguished French geologist writing, even so late as 1829, that in ancient times "tous les phénomènes géologiques se passaient dans des dimensions centuples de celles qu'ils présentent aujourd'hui." But now we have such certain evidence of the enormous length of the intervals within which volcanic regions assumed their present appearance; we have such satisfactory means of determining which of the events occurring within those intervals were or were not contemporary, that we are safe from the error of assuming that Nature at a single effort fashioned widely extended districts just as we now see them. And accordingly, we have the evidence of one of the most distinguished of living geologists, that there is no volcanic mass "of ancient date, distinctly referable to a single eruption, which can even rival in volume the matter poured out from Skaptar Jokul in 1783."

In the volcanic region of which Vesuvius or Somma is the principal vent, we have a remarkable instance of the deceptive nature of that state of rest into which some of the principal volcanoes frequently fall for many centuries together. For how many centuries before the Christian era Vesuvius had been at rest, is not known; but this is certain, that from the landing of the first Greek colony in Southern Italy, Vesuvius gave no signs of internal activity. It was recognized by Strabo as a volcanic mountain, but Pliny did not include it in the list of active volcanoes. In those days, the mountain presented a very different appearance from that which it now exhibits. In place of the two peaks now seen, there was a single, somewhat flattish summit, on which a slight depression marked the

place of an ancient crater. The fertile slopes of the mountain were covered with well-cultivated fields, and the thriving cities Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Stabiae, stood near the base of the sleeping mountain. So little did any thought of danger suggest itself in those times, that the bands of slaves, murderers, and pirates, which flocked to the standard of Spartacus, found a refuge, to the number of many thousands, within the very crater itself.

But though Vesuvius was at rest, the region of which Vesuvius is the main vent was far from being so. The island of Pithecusa (the modern Ischia) was shaken by frequent and terrible convulsions. It is even related that Prochyta (the modern Procida) was rent from Pithecusa in the course of a tremendous upheaval, though Pliny derives the name Prochyta (or "poured forth") from the supposed fact of this island having been poured forth by an eruption from Ischia. Far more probably, Prochyta was formed independently by submarine eruptions, as the volcanic islands near Santorin have been produced in more recent times.

So fierce were the eruptions from Pithecusa, that several Greek colonies which attempted to settle on this island were compelled to leave it. About 880 years before the Christian era, colonists under King Hiero of Syracuse, who had built a fortress on Pithecusa, were driven away by an eruption. Nor were eruptions the sole cause of danger. Poisonous exhalations, such as are emitted by volcanic craters after eruption, appear to have exhaled, at times, from extensive tracts on Pithecusa, and thus to have rendered the island uninhabitable.

Still nearer to Vesuvius lay the celebrated Lake Avernus. The name Avernus is said to be a corruption of the Greek word *Aornos*, signifying "without birds," the poisonous exhalations from the waters of the lake destroying all birds which attempted to fly over its surface. Doubt has been thrown on the destructive properties assigned by the ancients to the vapours ascending from Avernus. The lake is now a healthy and agreeable neighbourhood, frequented, says Humboldt, by many kinds of birds, which suffer no injury whatever even when they skim the very surface of the water. Yet there can be little doubt that Avernus hides the outlet of an extinct volcano; and long after this volcano had become inactive, the lake which concealed its site "may have deserved the appellation of 'atri janua Ditis,' emitting, perhaps, gases as destructive of animal life as those suffocating vapours given out by Lake Quilotoa, in Quito, in 1797, by which whole herds of cattle were killed on its shores, or as those deleterious emanations which annihilated all the cattle in the island of Lancerote, one of the Canaries, in 1780."

While Ischia was in full activity, not only was Vesuvius quiescent, but even Etna seemed to be gradually expiring, so that Seneca ranks this volcano among the number of nearly extinguished craters. At a late epoch, Alcian asserted that the mountain itself was sinking, so that seamen lost sight of the summit at a less distance across the seas than of old. Yet within the last two hundred years there have been eruptions

from Etna rivalling, if not surpassing, in intensity the convulsions recorded by ancient historians.

We shall not here attempt to show that Vesuvius and Etna belong to the same volcanic system, though there is reason not only for supposing this to be the case, but for the belief that all the subterranean forces whose effects have been shown from time to time over the district extending from the Canaries and Azores, across the whole of the Mediterranean, and into Syria itself, belong to but one great centre of internal action. But it is quite certain that Ischia and Vesuvius are outlets from a single source.

While Vesuvius was dormant, resigning for awhile its pretensions to be the principal vent of the great Neapolitan volcanic system, Ischia, we have seen, was rent by frequent convulsions. But the time was approaching when Vesuvius was to resume its natural functions, and with all the more energy that they had been for awhile suspended.

In the year 68 (after Christ) there occurred a violent convulsion of the earth around Vesuvius, during which much injury was done to neighbouring cities and many lives were lost. From this period shocks of earthquake were felt from time to time for sixteen years. These grew gradually more and more violent, until it began to be evident that the volcanic fires were about to return to their main vent. The obstruction which had so long impeded the exit of the confined matter was not however readily removed, and it was only in August of the year 79, after numerous and violent internal throes, that the superincumbent mass was at length hurled forth. Rocks and cinders, lava, sand, and scoriae, were propelled from the crater and spread many miles on every side of Vesuvius.

We have an interesting account of the great eruption which followed, in a letter from the younger Pliny to the younger Tacitus. The latter had asked for an account of the death of the elder Pliny, who lost his life in his eagerness to obtain a near view of the dreadful phenomenon. "He was at that time," says his nephew, "with the fleet under his command at Misenum. On the 24th of August, about one in the afternoon, my mother desired him to observe a cloud of very extraordinary size and shape. He had just returned from taking the benefit of the sun, and, after bathing himself in cold water, and taking a slight repast, had retired to his study. He arose at once, and went out upon a height whence he might more distinctly view this strange phenomenon. It was not at this distance discernible from what mountain the cloud issued, but it was found afterwards that it came from Vesuvius. I cannot give a more exact description of its figure than by comparing it to that of a pine-tree, for it shot up to great height in the form of a trunk, which extended itself at the top into a sort of branches; occasioned, I suppose, either by a sudden gust of air which impelled it, whose force decreased as it advanced upwards, or else the cloud itself, being pressed back by its own weight, expanded in this manner. The cloud appeared sometimes bright, at others dark and spotted, as it was more or less impregnated with earth and cinders."

These extraordinary appearances attracted the curiosity of the elder Pliny. He ordered a small vessel to be prepared, and started to seek a nearer view of the burning mountain. His nephew declined to accompany him, being engaged with his studies. As Pliny left the house he received a note from a lady whose house, being at the foot of Vesuvius, was in imminent danger of destruction. He set out accordingly with the design of rendering her assistance, and also of assisting others, "for the villas stood extremely thick upon that lovely coast." He ordered the galleys to be put to sea, and steered directly to the point of danger, so cool in the midst of the turmoil around "as to be able to make and dictate observations upon the motions and figures of that dreadful scene." As he approached Vesuvius, cinders, pumice-stones, and black fragments of burning rock, fell on and around the ships. "They were in danger, too, of running aground owing to the sudden retreat of the sea; vast fragments, also, rolled down from the mountain and obstructed all the shore." The pilot advising retreat, Pliny made the noble answer, "Fortune befriends the brave," and bade him press onwards to Stabiae. Here he found his friend Pomponianus in great consternation, already prepared for embarking and waiting only for a change in the wind. Exhorting Pomponianus to be of good courage, Pliny quietly ordered baths to be prepared; and "having bathed, sat down to supper with great cheerfulness, or at least (which is equally heroic) with all the appearance of it." Assuring his friend that the flames which appeared in several places were merely burning villages, Pliny presently retired to rest, and "being pretty fat," says his nephew, "and breathing hard, those who attended without actually heard him snore." But it became necessary to awaken him, for the court which led to his room was now almost filled with stones and ashes. He got up and joined the rest of the company, who were consulting on the propriety of leaving the house, now shaken from side to side by frequent concussions. They decided on seeking the fields for safety, and fastening pillows on their heads to protect them from falling stones, they advanced in the midst of an obscurity greater than that of the darkest night,—though beyond the limits of the great cloud it was already broad day. When they reached the shore they found the waves running too high to suffer them safely to venture to put out to sea. Pliny "having drunk a draught or two of cold water, lay down on a cloth that was spread out for him; but at this moment the flames and sulphureous vapours dispersed the rest of the company and obliged him to rise. Assisted by two of his servants, he got upon his feet, but instantly fell down dead; suffocated, I suppose," says his nephew, "by some gross and noxious vapour, for he always had weak lungs and suffered from a difficulty of breathing." His body was not found until the third day after his death, when for the first time it was light enough to search for him. He was found as he had fallen, "and looking more like a man asleep than dead."

But even at Misenum there was danger; though Vesuvius was distant

no less than fourteen miles. The earth was shaken with repeated and violent shocks, "insomuch," says the younger Pliny, "that they threatened our complete destruction." When morning came, the light was faint and glimmering; the buildings around seemed tottering to their fall, and, standing on the open ground, the chariots which Pliny had ordered were so agitated backwards and forwards that it was impossible to keep them steady, even by supporting them with large stones. The sea was rolled back upon itself, and many marine animals were left dry upon the shore. On the side of Vesuvius, a black and ominous cloud, bursting with sulphureous vapours, darted out long trains of fire, resembling flashes of lightning, but much larger. Presently the great cloud spread over Misenum and the island of Caprea. Ashes fell around the fugitives. On every side "nothing was to be heard but the shrieks of women and children, and the cries of men: some were calling for their children, others for their parents, others for their husbands, and only distinguishing each other by their voices: one was lamenting his own fate, another that of his family; some wished to die, that they might escape the dreadful fear of death; but the greater part imagined that the last and eternal night was come, which was to destroy the gods and the world together." At length a light appeared, which was not, however, the day, but the forerunner of an outburst of flames. These presently disappeared, and again a thick darkness spread over the scene. Ashes fell heavily upon the fugitives, so that they were in danger of being crushed, and buried in the thick layer rapidly covering the whole country. Many hours passed before the dreadful darkness began slowly to be dissipated. When at length day returned, and the sun even was seen faintly shining through the over-hanging canopy of ashes, "every object seemed changed, being covered over with white ashes as with a deep snow."

It is most remarkable that Pliny makes no mention in his letter of the destruction of the two populous and important cities, Pompeii and Herculaneum. We have seen that at Stabia a shower of ashes fell so heavily that, several days before the end of the eruption, the court leading to the elder Pliny's room was beginning to be filled up. And when the eruption ceased, Stabia was completely overwhelmed. Far more sudden, however, was the destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

It would seem that the two cities were first shaken violently by the throes of the disturbed mountain. The signs of such a catastrophe have been very commonly assigned to the earthquake which happened in 63, but it seems far more likely that most of them belong to the days immediately preceding the great outburst in 79. "In Pompeii," says Sir Charles Lyell, "both public and private buildings bear testimony to the catastrophe. The walls are rent, and in many places traversed by fissures still open." It is probable that the inhabitants were driven by these anticipatory throes to fly from the doomed towns. For though Dion Cassius relates that "two entire cities, Herculaneum and Pompeii, were buried under showers of ashes, while all the people were sitting in the

theatre," yet "the examination of the two cities enables us to prove," says Sir Charles, "that none of the people were destroyed in the theatres, and, indeed, that there were very few of the inhabitants who did not escape from both cities. Yet," he adds, "some lives were lost, and there was ample foundation for the tale in all its most essential particulars."

We may note here, in passing, that the account of the eruption given by Dion Cassius, who wrote a century and a half after the catastrophe, is sufficient to prove how terrible an impression had been made upon the inhabitants of Campania, from whose descendants he in all probability obtained the materials of his narrative. He writes that, "during the eruption, a multitude of men of superhuman stature, resembling giants, appeared, sometimes on the mountain, and sometimes in the environs; that stones and smoke were thrown out, the sun was hidden, and then the giants seemed to rise again while the sounds of trumpets were heard"—with much other matter of a similar sort.

In the great eruption of 79, Vesuvius poured forth lapilli, sand, cinders, and fragments of old lava, but no new lava flowed from the crater. Nor does it appear that any lava-stream was ejected during the six eruptions which took place during the following ten centuries. In the year 1086, for the first time, Vesuvius was observed to pour forth a stream of molten lava. Thirteen years later, another eruption took place; then ninety years passed without disturbance, and after that a long pause of 168 years. During this interval, however, the volcanic system, of which Vesuvius is the main but not the only vent, had been disturbed twice. For it is related that in 1198 the Solfatara Lake crater was in eruption; and in 1302, Ischia, dormant for at least 1,400 years, showed signs of new activity. For more than a year earthquakes had convulsed this island from time to time, and at length the disturbed region was relieved by the outburst of a lava stream from a new vent on the south-east of Ischia. The lava stream flowed right down to the sea, a distance of two miles. For two months, this dreadful outburst continued to rage; many houses were destroyed; and although the inhabitants of Ischia were not completely expelled, as happened of old with the Greek colonists, yet a partial emigration of the inhabitants took place.

The next eruption of Vesuvius took place in 1306; and then, until 1691, there occurred only one eruption, and that an unimportant one, in 1500. "It was remarked," says Sir Charles Lyell, "that throughout this long interval of rest, Etna was in a state of unusual activity, so as to lend countenance to the idea that the great Sicilian volcano may sometimes serve as a channel of discharge to elastic fluids and lava that would otherwise rise to the vents in Campania."

Nor was the abnormal activity of Etna the only sign that the quiescence of Vesuvius was not to be looked upon as any evidence of declining energy in the volcanic system. In 1586 a new mountain was suddenly thrown up in the Phlegrean Fields—a district including within its borders Pozzuoli, Lake Averno, and the Solfatara. The new mountain was

thrown up near the shores of the Bay of Bais. It is 440 feet above the level of the bay, and its base is about a mile and a half in circumference. The depth of the crater is 421 feet, so that its bottom is only six yards above the level of the bay. The spot on which the mountain was thrown up was formerly occupied by the Lucrine Lake; but the outburst filled up the greater part of the lake, leaving only a small and shallow pool.

The accounts which have reached us of the formation of this new mountain are not without interest. Falconi, who wrote in 1588, writes that several earthquakes took place during the two years preceding the outburst, and above twenty shocks on the day and night before the eruption. "The eruption began on September 29, 1588. It was on a Sunday, about one o'clock in the night, when flames of fire were seen between the hot-baths and Tripogola. In a short time the fire increased to such a degree that it burst open the earth in this place, and threw up a quantity of ashes and pumice-stones, mixed with water, which covered the whole country. The next morning the poor inhabitants of Pozzuoli quitted their habitations in terror, covered with the muddy and black shower, which continued the whole day in that country—flying from death, but with death painted in their countenances. Some with their children in their arms, some with sacks full of their goods; others leading an ass, loaded with their frightened family, towards Naples, &c. . . . The sea had retired on the side of Bais, abandoning a considerable tract; and the shore appeared almost entirely dry, from the quantity of ashes and broken pumice-stones thrown up by the eruption."

Pietro Giacomo di Toledo gives us some account of the phenomena which preceded the eruption: "That plain which lies between Lake Avernus, the Monte Barbaro, and the sea, was raised a little, and many cracks were made in it, from some of which water issued; at the same time the sea immediately adjoining the plain dried up about two hundred paces, so that the fish were left on the sand a prey to the inhabitants of Pozzuoli. At last, on the 29th of September, about two o'clock in the night, the earth opened near the lake, and discovered a horrid mouth, from which were vomited furiously smoke, fire, stones, and mud composed of ashes, making at the time of the opening a noise like the loudest thunder. The stones which followed were by the flames converted to pumice, and some of these were *larger than an ox*. The stones went about as high as a cross-bow will carry, and then fell down, sometimes on the edge, and sometimes into the mouth itself. The mud was of the colour of ashes, and at first very liquid, then by degrees less so; and in such quantities that in less than twelve hours, with the help of the above-mentioned stones, a mountain was raised of 1,000 paces in height. Not only Pozzuoli and the neighbouring country were full of this mud, but the city of Naples also; so that many of its palaces were defaced by it. This eruption lasted two nights and two days without intermission, though not always with the same force; the third day the eruption ceased, and I went up with many people to the top of the new hill, and saw down into its

mouth, which was a round cavity about a quarter of a mile in circumference, in the middle of which the stones which had fallen were boiling up just as a cauldron of water boils on the fire. The fourth day it began to throw up again, and the seventh day much more, but still with less violence than the first night. At this time many persons who were on the hill were knocked down by the stones and killed, or smothered with the smoke."

And now, for nearly a century, the whole district continued in repose. Nearly five centuries had passed since there had been any violent eruption of Vesuvius itself; and the crater seemed gradually assuming the condition of an extinct volcano. The interior of the crater is described by Bracini, who visited Vesuvius shortly before the eruption of 1681, in terms that would have fairly represented its condition before the eruption of 79:—"The crater was five miles in circumference, and about a thousand paces deep; its sides were covered with brushwood, and at the bottom there was a plain on which cattle grazed. In the woody parts, wild boars frequently harboured. In one part of the plain, covered with ashes, were three small pools, one filled with hot and bitter water, another saltier than the sea, and a third hot, but tasteless." But in December, 1681, the mountain blew away the covering of rock and cinders which supported these woods and pastures. Seven streams of lava poured from the crater, causing a fearful destruction of life and property. Resina, built over the site of Herculaneum, was entirely consumed by a raging lava-stream. Heavy showers of rain, generated by the steam evolved during the eruption, caused, in their turn, an amount of destruction scarcely less important than that resulting from the lava-streams. For, falling upon the cone, and sweeping thence large masses of ashes and volcanic dust, these showers produced destructive streams of mud, consistent enough to merit the name of "aqueous lava" commonly assigned to it.

An interval of thirty-five years passed before the next eruption. But, since 1686, there has been a continual series of eruptions, so that the mountain has scarcely ever been at rest for more than ten years together. Occasionally there have been two eruptions within a few months; and it is well worthy of remark that, during the three centuries which have elapsed since the formation of Monte Nuovo, there has been no volcanic disturbance in any part of the Neapolitan volcanic district save in Vesuvius alone. Of old, as Brieslak well remarks, there had been irregular disturbances in some part of the Bay of Naples once in every two hundred years;—the eruption of Solfatara in the twelfth century, that of Ischia in the fourteenth, and that of Monte Nuevo in the sixteenth; but "the eighteenth has formed an exception to the rule." It seems clear that the constant series of eruptions from Vesuvius during the past two hundred years has sufficed to relieve the volcanic district of which Vesuvius is the principal vent.

Of the eruptions which have disturbed Vesuvius during the last two centuries, those of 1779, 1798, and 1822, are in some respects the most remarkable.

Sir William Hamilton has given a very interesting account of the eruption of 1779. Passing over those points in which this eruption resembled others, we may note its more remarkable features. Sir William Hamilton says, that in this eruption molten lava was thrown up, in magnificent jets to the height of at least 10,000 feet. Masses of stones and scoriae were to be seen propelled along by these lava jets. Vesuvius seemed to be surmounted by an enormous column of fire. Some of the jets were directed by the wind towards Ottajano ; others fell on the cone of Vesuvius, on the outer circular mountain Somma, and on the valley between. Falling, still red-hot and liquid, they covered a district more than two miles and a half wide with a mass of fire. The whole space above this district, to the height of 10,000 feet, was filled also with the rising and falling lava streams ; so that there was continually present a body of fire covering the extensive space we have mentioned, and extending nearly two miles high. The heat of this enormous fire-column was distinctly perceptible at a distance of at least six miles on every side.

The eruption of 1793 presented a different aspect. Dr. Clarke tells us that millions of red-hot stones were propelled into the air to at least half the height of the cone itself ; then turning, they fell all around in noble curves. They covered nearly half the cone of Vesuvius with fire. Huge masses of white smoke were vomited forth by the disturbed mountain, and formed themselves, at a height of many thousands of feet above the crater, into a huge, ever-moving canopy, through which, from time to time, were hurled pitch-black jets of volcanic dust, and dense vapours, mixed with cascades of red-hot rocks and scoriae. The rain which fell from the cloud-canopy was scalding hot.

Dr. Clarke was able to compare the different appearances presented by the lava when it burst from the very mouth of the crater, and lower down, when it had approached the plain. As it rushed forth from its imprisonment, it streamed a liquid, white, and brilliantly pure river, which burned for itself a smooth channel through a great arched chasm in the side of the mountain. It flowed with the clearness of "honey in regular channels, cut finer than art can imitate, and glowing with all the splendour of the sun. Sir William Hamilton had conceived," adds Dr. Clarke, "that stones thrown upon a current of lava would produce no impression. I was soon convinced of the contrary. Light bodies, indeed, of five, ten, and fifteen pounds' weight, made little or no impression, even at the source ; but bodies of sixty, seventy, and eighty pounds were seen to form a kind of bed on the surface of the lava, and float away with it. A stone of three hundredweight, that had been thrown out by the crater, lay near the source of the current of lava. I raised it up on one end, and then let it fall in upon the liquid lava, when it gradually sank beneath the surface and disappeared. If I wished to describe the manner in which it acted upon the lava, I should say that it was like a loaf of bread thrown into a bowl of very thick honey, which gradually involves itself in the heavy liquid, and then slowly sinks to the bottom."

But, as the lava flowed down the mountain slopes, it lost its brilliant whiteness; a crust began to form upon the surface of the still molten lava, and this crust broke into innumerable fragments of porous matter, called scoriae. Underneath this crust—across which Dr. Clarke and his companions were able to pass without other injury than the singeing of their boots—the liquid lava still continued to force its way onward and downward past all obstacles. On its arrival at the bottom of the mountain, says Dr. Clarke, “the whole current,” encumbered with huge masses of scoriae, “resembled nothing so much as a heap of unconnected cinders from an iron-foundry,” “rolling slowly along,” he says in another place, “and falling with a rattling noise over one another.”

After the eruption described by Dr. Clarke, the great crater gradually filled up. Lava boiled up from below, and small craters, which formed themselves over the bottom and sides of the great one, poured forth lava loaded with scoriae. Thus, up to October 1822, there was to be seen, in place of a regular crateriform opening, a rough and uneven surface, scored by hugo fissures, whence vapour was continually being poured, so as to form clouds above the hideous heap of ruins. But the great eruption of 1822 not only flung forth all the mass which had accumulated within the crater, but wholly changed the appearance of the cone. An immense abyss was formed three-quarters of a mile across, and extending 2,000 feet downwards into the very heart of Vesuvius. Had the lips of the crater remained unchanged, indeed, the depth of this great gulf would have been far greater. But so terrific was the force of the explosion that the whole of the upper part of the cone was carried clean away, and the mountain reduced in height by nearly a full fifth of its original dimensions. From the time of its formation the chasm gradually filled up; so that, when Mr. Scrope saw it soon after the eruption, its depth was reduced by more than 1,000 feet.

Of late, Vesuvius has been as busy as ever. In 1833 and 1834 there were eruptions; and it is but twelve years since a great outburst took place. Then, for three weeks together, lava streamed down the mountain slopes. A river of molten lava swept away the village of Cercolo, and ran nearly to the sea at Ponte Maddaloni. There were then formed ten small craters within the great one. But these have now united, and pressure from beneath has formed a vast cone where they had been. The cone has risen above the rim of the crater, and, as we write, torrents of lava are being poured forth. At first the lava formed a lake of fire, but the seething mass found an outlet, and poured in a wide stream towards Ottajano. Masses of red-hot stone and rock are hurled forth, and a vast canopy of white vapour hangs over Vesuvius, forming at night, when illuminated by the raging mass below, a glory of resplendent flame around the summit of the mountain.

It may seem strange that the neighbourhood of so dangerous a mountain should be inhabited by races free to choose more peaceful districts. Yet, though Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Stabiae lie buried beneath the

lava and ashes thrown forth by Vesuvius, Portici and Resina, Torre del Greco and Torre dell' Annunziata have taken their place ; and a large population, cheerful and prosperous, flourish around the disturbed mountain, and over the district of which it is the somewhat untrustworthy safety-valve.

It has, indeed, been well pointed out by Sir Charles Lyell that, "the general tendency of subterranean movements, when their effects are considered for a sufficient lapse of ages, is eminently beneficial, and that they constitute an essential part of that mechanism by which the integrity of the habitable surface is preserved. Why the working of this same machinery should be attended with so much evil, is a mystery far beyond the reach of our philosophy, and must probably remain so until we are permitted to investigate, not our planet alone and its inhabitants, but other parts of the moral and material universe with which they may be connected. Could our survey embrace other worlds and the events, not of a few centuries only, but of periods as indefinite as those with which geology renders us familiar, some apparent contradictions might be reconciled, and some difficulties would doubtless be cleared up. But even then, as our capacities are finite, while the scheme of the universe may be infinite, both in time and space, it is presumptuous to suppose that all source of doubt and perplexity would ever be removed. On the contrary, they might, perhaps, go on augmenting in number, although our confidence in the wisdom of the plan of nature should increase at the same time ; for it has been justly said" (by Sir Humphry Davy) "that the greater the circle of light, the greater the boundary of darkness by which it is surrounded."

De Foe's Novels.

ACCORDING to the high authority of Charles Lamb, it has sometimes happened "that from no inferior merit in the rest, but from some superior good fortune in the choice of a subject, some single work" (of a particular author's) "shall have been suffered to eclipse, and cast into the shade, the deserts of its less fortunate brethren." And after quoting the case of Bunyan's *Holy War* as compared with the *Pilgrim's Progress*, he adds that, "in no instance has this excluding partiality been exerted with more unfairness than against what may be termed the secondary novels or romances of De Foe." He proceeds to declare that there are at least four other fictitious narratives by the same writer,—*Roxana*, *Singleton*, *Moll Flanders*, and *Colonel Jack*,—which possess an interest not inferior to *Robinson Crusoe*,—"except what results from a less felicitous choice of situation." Granting most unreservedly that the same hand is perceptible in the minor novels as in *Robinson Crusoe*, and that they bear at every page the most unequivocal symptoms of De Foe's workmanship, we venture to doubt the "partiality" and the "unfairness" of preferring to them their more popular rival. The instinctive judgment of the world is not really biassed by anything except the intrinsic power exerted by a book over its sympathies; and as in the long run it has honoured *Robinson Crusoe*, in spite of the critics, and has comparatively neglected *Roxana* and the companion stories, there is probably some good cause for the distinction. The apparent injustice to books resembles what we often see in the case of men. A. B. becomes Lord Chancellor, whilst C. D. remains for years a briefless barrister; and yet for the life of us we cannot tell but that C. D. is the abler man of the two. Perhaps he was wanting in some one of the less conspicuous elements that are essential to a successful career;—he said, "Open, wheat?" instead of "Open, sesame!" and the barriers remained unaffected by his magic. The ordinary metaphor about the round peg and the square holes requires to be supplemented. For a second-rate success it is enough to fix a round peg, with more or less accuracy, into a round hole of about the right size; but for one of those successes which make a man famous at a blow, you have to find a queer-shaped peg to match some strangely polygonal hole to a nicety. If the least corner runs out at a wrong angle the peg refuses to enter the hole, or as we might rather say, the key refuses to enter the lock, and the gates of glory remain obstinately closed. Now it may be that the felicitous choice of situation to which Lamb refers gave just the turn which fitted the key to the lock; and it is little use to plead that *Roxana*, *Colonel Jack*, and others might

have done the same trick if only they had received a little filing, or some slight change in shape : a shoemaker might as well argue that if you had only one toe less his shoes wouldn't pinch you.

To leave the unsatisfactory ground of metaphor, we may find out, on examination, that De Foe had discovered in *Robinson Crusoe* precisely the field in which his talents could be most effectually applied ; and that a very slight alteration in the subject-matter might change the merit of his work to a disproportionate extent. The more special the idiosyncrasy upon which a man's literary success is founded, the greater, of course, the probability that a small change will disconcert him. A man who can only perform upon the drum will have to wait for certain combinations of other instruments before his special talent can be turned to account. Now, the talent in which De Foe surpasses all other writers is just one of those peculiar gifts which must wait for a favourable chance. When a gentleman, in a fairy story, has a power of seeing a hundred miles, or covering seven leagues at a stride, we know that an opportunity will speedily occur for putting his faculties to use. But the gentleman with the seven-leagued boots is useless when the occasion offers itself for telescopic vision, and the eyes are good for nothing without the power of locomotion. To De Foe, if we may imitate the language of the *Arabian Nights*, was given a tongue to which no one could listen without believing every word that he uttered—a qualification, by the way, which would serve its owner far more effectually in this commonplace world than swords of sharpness or cloaks of darkness, or other fairy paraphernalia. In other words, he had the most marvellous power ever known of giving verisimilitude to his fictions ; or, in other words again, he had the most amazing talent on record for telling lies. We have all read how the *History of the Plague*, the *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, and even, it is said, *Robinson Crusoe*, have succeeded in passing themselves off for veritable narratives. A more curious case is that of the *Memoirs of Captain Carleton*, which Dr. Johnson accepted as genuine, but which has always passed for De Foe's. Lord Stanhope, however, in a note to his *War of the Succession in Spain*, declares his belief in its authenticity, principally, it seems, on the ground of a discovery that a Captain Carleton was really taken prisoner, as is related in the memoirs, at the siege of Denia, in Spain. It is still, however, possible, as the internal evidence would seem to suggest, that De Foe made use of the real Captain Carleton's papers as a foundation, or even as the substance of his narrative. In any case, it is as characteristic that a genuine narrative should be attributed to De Foe, as that De Foe's narrative should be taken as genuine. We may add an odd testimony to De Foe's powers as a liar (a word for which there is, unfortunately, no equivalent that does not imply some blame) of later occurrence. Mr. M'Queen, quoted in Captain Burton's *Nile Basin*, names *Captain Singleton* as a genuine account of travels in Central Africa, and seriously mentions De Foe's imaginary pirate as "a claimant for the honour of the discovery of the sources of the White Nile."

Some of the literary artifices to which De Foe owed his power of producing this illusion are sufficiently plain. Of all the fictions which he succeeded in palming off for truths, none is more instructive than that admirable ghost, Mrs. Veal. It is, as it were, a hand-specimen, in which we may study his *modus operandi* on a convenient scale. Like the sonnets of some great poets, it contains in a few lines all the essential peculiarities of his art, and an admirable commentary has been appended to it by Sir Walter Scott. The first device which strikes us is his ingenious plan for manufacturing corroborative evidence. The ghost appears to Mrs. Bargrave. The story of the apparition is told by a "very sober and understanding gentlewoman, who lives within a few doors of Mrs. Bargrave;" and the character of this sober gentlewoman is supported by the testimony of a justice of peace at Maidstone, "a very intelligent person." This elaborate chain of evidence is intended to divert our attention from the obvious circumstance that the whole story rests upon the authority of the anonymous person who tells us of the sober gentlewoman, who supports Mis. Bargrave, and is confirmed by the intelligent justice. Simple as the artifice appears, it is one which is constantly used in supernatural stories of the present day. One of the commonest of those improving legends tells how a ghost appeared to two officers in Canada, and how, subsequently, one of the officers met the ghost's twin brother in London, and straightway exclaimed, "You are the person who appeared to me in Canada!" Many people are diverted from the weak part of the story by this ingenuous confirmation, and, in their surprise at the coherence of the narrative, forget that the narrative itself rests upon entirely anonymous evidence. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link; but if you show how admirably the last few are united together, half the world will forget to test the security of the equally essential parts which are kept out of sight. De Foe generally repeats a similar trick in the prefaces of his fictions. "'Tis certain," he says, in the *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, "no man could have given a description of his retreat from Marston Moor to Rochdale, and thence over the moors to the North, in so apt and proper terms, unless he had really travelled over the ground he describes," which, indeed, is quite true, but by no means proves that the journey was made by a fugitive from that particular battle. He separates himself more ostentatiously from the supposititious author by praising his admirable manner of relating the memoirs, and the "wonderful variety of incidents with which they are beautified;" and, with admirable impudence, assures us that they are written in so soldierly a style, that it "seems impossible any but the very person who was present in every action here related was the relater of them." In the preface to *Roxana*, he acts, with equal spirit, the character of an impartial person, giving us the evidence on which he is himself convinced of the truth of the story, as though he would, of all things, refrain from pushing us unfairly for our belief. The writer, he says, took the story from the lady's own mouth; he was, of course, obliged to disguise names and places; but was himself "particularly acquainted with this

lady's first husband, the brewer, and with his father, and also with his bad circumstances, and knows that first part of the story." The rest we must, of course, take upon the lady's own evidence, but less unwillingly as the first is thus corroborated. We cannot venture to suggest to so calm a witness that he has invented both the lady and the writer of her history; and, in short, that when he says that A. says that B. says something, it is, after all, merely the anonymous "he" who is speaking. In giving us his authority for *Moll Flanders*, he ventures upon the more refined art of throwing a little discredit upon the narrator's veracity. She professes to have abandoned her evil ways, but, as he tells us with a kind of aside, and as it were cautioning us against over-incredulity, "it seems" (a phrase itself suggesting the impartial looker-on) that in her old age "she was not so extraordinary a penitent as she was at first; it seems only" (for, after all, you mustn't make *too* much of my insinuations) "that indeed she always spoke with abhorrence of her former life." So we are left in a qualified state of confidence, as if we had been talking about one of his patients with the wary director of a reformatory:

This last touch, which is one of De Foe's favourite expedients, is most fully exemplified in the story of *Mrs. Veal*. The author affects to take us into his confidence, to make us privy to the pros and cons in regard to the veracity of his own characters, till we are quite disarmed. The sober gentlewoman vouches for Mrs. Bargrave; but Mrs. Bargrave is by no means allowed to have it all her own way. One of the ghost's communications related to the disposal of a certain sum of 10*l.* a year, of which Mrs. Bargrave, according to her own account, could have known nothing, except by this supernatural intervention. Mrs. Veal's friends, however, tried to throw doubt upon the story of her appearance, considering that it was in some way disreputable for a decent woman to go abroad after her death. One of them, therefore, declared that Mrs. Bargrave was a liar, and that she had, in fact, known of the 10*l.* beforehand. On the other hand, the person who thus attacked Mrs. Bargrave had himself the "reputation of a notorious liar." Mr. Veal, the ghost's brother, was too much of a gentleman to make such gross imputations. He confined himself to the more moderate assertion that Mrs. Bargrave had been crazed by a bad husband. He maintained that the story must be a mistake, because, just before her death, his sister had declared that she had nothing to dispose of. This statement, however, may be reconciled with the ghost's remarks about the 10*l.*, because she obviously mentioned such a trifle merely by way of a token of the reality of her appearance. Mr. Veal, indeed, makes rather a better point by stating that a certain purse of gold mentioned by the ghost was found, not in the cabinet where she told Mrs. Bargrave that she had placed it, but in a comb-box. Yet, again, Mr. Veal's statement is here rather suspicious, for it is known that Mrs. Veal was very particular about her cabinet, and would not have let her gold out of it. We are left in some doubts by this conflict of evidence, although the obvious desire of Mr. Veal to throw discredit on the story of

his sister's appearance rather inclines us to believe in Mrs. Bargrave's story, who could have had no conceivable motive for inventing such a fiction. The argument is finally clinched by a decisive coincidence. The ghost wears a silk dress. In the course of a long conversation, she incidentally mentioned to Mrs. Bargrave that this was a scoured silk, newly made up. When Mrs. Bargrave reported this remarkable circumstance to a certain Mrs. Wilson, "You have certainly seen her," exclaimed that lady, "for none knew but Mrs. Veal and myself that the gown had been scoured." To this crushing piece of evidence, it seems that neither Mr. Veal nor the notorious liar could invent any sufficient reply.

One can almost fancy De Foe chuckling as he concocted the refinements of this most marvellous narrative. The whole artifice, so far as we have traced it hitherto, is, indeed, of a simple kind. Lord Sunderland, according to Macaulay, once ingeniously defended himself against a charge of treachery, by asking whether it was possible that any man should be so base as to do that which he was, in fact, in the constant habit of doing. De Foe asks us in substance, Is it conceivable that any man should tell stories so elaborate, so complex, with so many unnecessary details, with so many inclinations of evidence this way and that, unless the stories were true? We instinctively answer, that it is, in fact, inconceivable; and, even apart from any such refinements as we have noticed, the circumstantiality of the stories is quite sufficient to catch an unwary critic. It is, indeed, perfectly easy to tell a story which shall be mistaken for a *bond fide* narrative, if only we are indifferent to such considerations as making it interesting or artistically satisfactory. We may pledge our words that the following narrative is false from beginning to end; and yet, if any of our readers read it in a newspaper, or heard it told *viva voce*, they would probably receive it without hesitation: "On the 8th of January last we were walking down the Strand. Just before us was an old woman, in a red shawl, and with a large umbrella. We had not time to remark the other details of her dress. Just as she stepped upon the crossing where Craven Street joins the Strand, a hansom cab, driven by a man with large black whiskers, whose number began with the figures 118, came up Craven Street at a rate of eight miles an hour, and not observing the old woman——" but it is unnecessary to continue the narrative. It is a curious and interesting experiment, from which, on moral grounds, we must, of course, dissuade our readers, to try what may be called the force of conviction which belongs to bare assertion. Tell a large company that the Emperor Napoleon has landed with 100,000 men at Dover; or that a heavy dining-room table has risen into the air without being touched, and rapped out a lively tune against the chandelier, and the odds are that half of them will believe you. Indeed, so simple are mankind, in spite of many newspapers, that most people will take a thing as gospel truth, simply on the score of having read it in print. We cannot, then, take the mere fact of producing a truthful narrative as, of itself, very remarkable; if the story is not too obviously moulded so as to produce a

given result, or is enforced with a sufficient number of irrelevant details, the feat, such as it is, may be pretty certainly performed. Sometimes, indeed, De Foe seems to overreach himself. Colonel Jack, at the end of a long career, tells us how one of his boyish companions stole certain articles at a fair, and gives us the list, of which this is a part:—" 5thly, a silver box, with 7s. in small silver ; 6, a pocket-handkerchief ; 7, another ; 8, a jointed baby, and a little looking-glass." The affectation of extreme precision, especially in the charming item "another," destroys the perspective of the story. We are listening to a contemporary, not to an old man giving us his fading recollections of a disreputable childhood.

The peculiar merit, then, of De Foe must be sought in something more than the circumstantial nature of his lying, or even the ingenuous artifices by which he contrives to corroborate his own narrative. These, indeed, show the pleasure which he took in simulating truth; and he may very probably have attached undue importance to this talent in the infancy of novel-writing, as in the infancy of painting it was held for the greatest of triumphs when birds came and pecked at the grapes in a picture. That this power rested upon something more than a bit of literary trickery, may be inferred from De Foe's fate in another department of authorship. Of his remarkable political writings, this is not the place to speak, although it might be interesting to trace in them some of the same qualities, especially the strong vernacular style, running at times into diffuseness and over-asseveration, which is so conspicuous in his novels. It seems, however, to be a more special indication of his peculiar cast of talent, that he twice got into trouble for a device exactly analogous to that which he afterwards practised in fiction. On both occasions he was punished for assuming a character for purposes of mystification. In the latest instance, it is seen, the pamphlet called *What if the Pretender Comes?* was written in such obvious irony, that the mistake of his intentions must have been wilful. The other, and better known performance, *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, seems really to have imposed upon his readers. The case is much as if Mr. Bright should have been prosecuted, first, for having assumed the character of a follower of Dr. Pusey, and secondly, for having assumed that of a supporter of Lord Derby; and we must suppose that he had, in the first case at least, put on the mask so successfully that the genuine High Churchmen were fairly taken in, and were only roused from their delusion by discovering the fearful scrape into which their false guide had led them. It is difficult in these days of toleration to imagine that any one can have taken the violent suggestions of the *Shortest Way* as put forward seriously. To those who might say that persecuting the Dissenters was cruel, says De Foe, "I answer, 'tis cruelty to kill a snake or a toad in cold blood, but the poison of their nature makes it a charity to our neighbours to destroy those creatures, not for any personal injury received, but for prevention. . . . Serpents, toads, and vipers, &c., are noxious to the body, and poison the sensitive life: these poison the soul, corrupt our posterity, ensnare our children, destroy the vital of our happiness,

our future felicity, and contaminate the whole mass." And he concludes, "Alas, the Church of England! What with popery on the one hand, and schismatics on the other, how has she been crucified between two thieves! Now let us crucify the thieves! Let her foundations be established upon the destruction of her enemies: the doors of mercy being always open to the returning part of the deluded people; let the obstinate be ruled with a rod of iron!" It gives a pleasant impression of the spirit of the times, to remember that this could be taken for a genuine utterance of orthodoxy: that De Foe was imprisoned and pilloried, and had to write a serious protestation that it was only a joke, and that he meant to expose the nonjuring party by putting their secret wishes into plain English. " 'Tis hard," he says, "that this should not be perceived by all the town; that not one man can see it, either Churchman or Dissenter." It certainly was very hard; but a perusal of the whole pamphlet may make it a degree more intelligible. De Foe's irony is not so keen or vivacious as the irony of Swift: *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* does not sparkle with such brilliant hits as, for example, the argument against abolishing Christianity; as indeed the irony is altogether less delicate and ingenious; nor does it run into such extravagance of bitter humour as the proposal for converting Irish babies into food. Compared with such masterpieces of art, there is a certain coarseness of texture about De Foe's work; he wields a heavier and clumsier weapon, approaching more nearly to the bludgeon than the rapier. But, on the other hand, the ironical intention is better concealed. The *Shortest Way* begins with a comparative gravity to throw us off our guard; the author is not afraid of imitating a little of the dulness of his supposed antagonists, and repeats with all imaginable seriousness the very taunts which a High Church bigot would in fact have used; it was not a sound defence of persecution to say that the Dissenters had been cruel when they had the upper hand, and that penalties imposed upon them were merely retaliation for injuries suffered under Cromwell and from Scotch Presbyterians; but it was one of those topics upon which a hot-headed persecutor would naturally dwell, though De Foe gives him rather more forcible language than he would be likely to possess. It is only towards the end that the ironical purpose crops out in, as we should have thought, an unmistakeable manner. The difficulty in using your opponents' argument so as to exhibit their absurdity is, that most people are too impatient to bring out the ludicrous side. The caricature is too palpable, and invites ridicule too ostentatiously. An impatient man soon frets under the mask and betrays his real strangeness in the hostile camp.

Here, then, we find a certain quality of De Foe's intellect which we hope it is not too fanciful to trace in his fictions. He was one of those men in whom the emotions, so to speak, lie rather far from the understanding. Amongst the political writers of that age he was, on the whole, distinguished for good temper and an absence of violence. He reminds us in this, as in certain other aspects, of Mr. Cobden: for example, in his free-trade tendencies, his dislike to unnecessary war, and to the cost of

unreasoning patriotism. Although a party man, he was by no means a man to swallow the whole party platform. He walked on his own legs, and was not afraid to be called a deserter by more thoroughgoing partisans. The principles which he most ardently supported were those of religious toleration and hatred to every form of arbitrary power. Now the intellectual groundwork upon which such a character is formed has certain conspicuous merits, along with certain undeniable weaknesses. Amongst the first may be reckoned that strong grasp of facts,—which was developed to an almost disproportionate degree in De Foe,—a resolution to see things as they are, without the gloss which is contracted from strong party sentiment. He was one of those men of vigorous common-sense who like to have everything down plainly and distinctly in good unmistakeable black and white, and enjoy a voracious appetite for facts and figures. He was, therefore, able—within the limits of his vision—to see things from both sides, and to take his adversaries' opinions as calmly as his own, so long, at least, as they dealt with the class of considerations with which he was accustomed to deal; for, indeed, there are certain regions of discussion to which we cannot be borne on the wings of statistics, or even of common sense. And this, the weak side of his intellect, is equally unmistakeable. The matter-of-fact man may be compared to one who suffers from colour-blindness. Perhaps he may have a power of penetrating, and even microscopic vision; but he sees everything in his favourite black and white or gray, and loses all the delights of gorgeous, though it may be deceptive, colouring. The poet wishes for the power of seeing ourselves as others see us. We would rather wish for the occasional power of seeing the world as others see it—for the liberty to take a glance through the mental camera of some of our great writers. One man sees everything in the forcible light and shade of Rembrandt: a few heroes stand out conspicuously as a focus of brilliancy, from a background of imperfectly defined shadows, clustering round the centres in strange but picturesque confusion. To another, every figure is full of interest, with singular contrasts and sharply defined features; the whole effect is somewhat spoilt by the want of perspective and the perpetual sparkle and glitter; yet when we fix our attention upon any special part, it attracts us by its undeniably vivacity and vitality. To a third, again, the individual figures become dimmer, but he sees a slow and majestic procession of shapes imperceptibly developing into some harmonious whole. Men profess to reach their philosophical conclusions by some process of logic; but the imagination is the faculty which furnishes the raw material upon which the logic is employed, and, unconsciously to its owners, determines, for the most part, the shape into which their theories will be moulded. Now De Foe was above the ordinary standard, in so far as he did not, like most of us, see things merely as a blurred and inextricable chaos; but he was below the great writers to whom we have alluded in the comparative coldness and dry precision of his mental vision. To him the world was a vast picture, from which all confusion was banished; everything was definite, clear, and

precise as in a photograph ; as in a photograph, too, everything could be accurately measured, and the result stated in figures ; by the same parallel, there was a want of perspective, so far as the most distant objects were as precisely given as the nearest ; and yet, further, there was the same absence of the colouring which is caused in natural objects by light and heat, and in mental pictures by the fire of imaginative passion. The result is a product which is to Fielding or Scott what a portrait by a first-rate photographer is to one by Vandyke or Reynolds, though, perhaps, the peculiar qualifications which go to make a De Foe are as rare as those which form the more elevated artist.

To illustrate this a little more in detail, one curious proof of the want of the passionate element in De Foe's novels is the singular calmness with which he describes his villains. He always looks at the matter in a purely business-like point of view. It is very wrong to steal, or break any of the commandments : partly because the chances are that it won't pay, and partly also because the devil—of whose position in De Foe's imagination we shall presently have to speak—will doubtless get hold of you in time. But a villain in De Foe is extremely like a virtuous person, only that, so to speak, he has unluckily backed the losing side. Thus, for example, Colonel Jack is a thief from his youth up ; Moll Flanders is a thief, and worse ; Roxana is a highly immoral lady, and is under some suspicion of a most detestable murder ; and Captain Singleton is a pirate of the genuine buccaneering school. Yet we should really doubt, but for their own confessions, whether they have villainy enough amongst them to furnish an average pickpocket. Roxana occasionally talks about a hell within, and even has unpleasant dreams concerning "apparitions of devils and monsters, of falling into gulphs, and from off high and steep precipices." She has, we may add, excellent reasons for her discomfort. Still, in spite of a very erroneous course of practice, her moral tone is all that can be desired. She discourses about the importance of keeping to the paths of virtue with the most exemplary punctuality, though she does not find them convenient for her own personal use. Colonel Jack is a young Arab of the streets—as it is fashionable to call them now-a-days—sleeping in the ashes of a glasshouse by night, and consorting with thieves by day. Still the exemplary nature of his sentiments would go far to establish Lord Palmerston's rather heterodox theory of the innate goodness of man. He talks like a book from his earliest infancy. He once forgets himself so far as to rob a couple of poor women on the highway instead of picking rich men's pockets ; but his conscience pricks him so much that he cannot rest till he has restored the money. Captain Singleton is a still more striking case : he is a pirate by trade, but with a strong resemblance to the ordinary British merchant in his habits of thought. He ultimately retires from a business in which the risks are too great for his taste, marries, and settles down quietly on his savings. There is a certain Quaker who joins his ship, really as a volunteer, but under a show of compulsion, in order to avoid the possible inconveniences of a capture. The Quaker always advises him

in his difficulties in such a way as to avoid responsibility. When they are in action with a Portuguese man-of-war, for example, the Quaker sees a chance of boarding, and coming up to Singleton, says very calmly, "Friend, what dost thou mean? why dost thou not visit thy neighbour in the ship, the door being open for thee?" This ingenious gentleman always preserves as much humanity as is compatible with his peculiar position, and even prevents certain negroes being tortured into confession, on the unanswerable ground, that as neither party understands a word of the other's language, the confession will not be to much purpose. "It is no compliment to my moderation," says Singleton, "to say, I was convinced by those reasons; and yet we had all much ado to keep our second lieutenant from murdering some of them to make them tell."

Now this humane pirate takes up pretty much the position which De Foe's villains generally occupy in good earnest. They do very objectionable things; but they always speak like steady, respectable Englishmen, with an eye to the main chance. It is true that there is nothing more difficult than to make a villain tell his own story naturally; in a way, that is, so as to show at once the badness of the motive and the excuse by which the actor reconciles it to his own mind. By far the finest example we can recollect, is in that wonderful novel, *Barry Lyndon*, which, in its extraordinary directness and power of realization, very much reminds us of De Foe's writing. In dramatic force, however, it is infinitely superior. Thackeray enables us to realize the singular moral confusion of his odious hero. De Foe is entirely deficient in this capacity of appreciating a character different from his own. His actors are merely so many repetitions of himself placed under different circumstances, and committing crimes in the way of business as De Foe might himself have carried out a commercial transaction. From the outside they are perfect; they are evidently copied from the life; and Captain Singleton is himself a repetition of the celebrated Captain Kidd, who indeed is mentioned in the novel. But of the state of mind which leads a man to be a pirate, and of the effects which it produces upon his morals, De Foe has either no notion, or is, at least, totally incapable of giving us a representation. All which goes by the name of psychological analysis in modern fiction is totally alien to his art. He could, as we have said, show such dramatic power as may be implied in transporting himself to a different position, and looking at matters even from his adversary's point of view; but of the further power of appreciating his adversary's character, he shows not the slightest trace.

In short, to use another of the technical terms of modern criticism, his stories are entirely objective. He looks at his actors from the outside, and gives us with wonderful minuteness all the details of their lives; but he never seems to remember that within the mechanism whose working he describes there is a soul very different from that of Daniel De Foe. Rather, he seems to see in mankind nothing but so many million Daniel De Foes, in all sorts of postures, and thrown into every variety of difficulty, but the stuff of which they are composed is identical with that

which he buttons into his own coat ; there is variety of form, but no colouring, in his pictures of life. We may ask again, therefore, what is the peculiar source of De Foe's power ? He has little or no dramatic power, in the higher sense of the word, which implies sympathy with many characters and varying tones of mind. If he had written *Henry IV.*, Falstaff, and Hotspur, and Prince Hal would all have been as like each other as are generally the first and second murderer. Nor is the mere fact that he tells a story with a strange appearance of veracity sufficient ; for, as we flatter ourselves that we have sufficiently shown in the little anecdote which we ventured to extemporeise, a story may be truth-like and yet deadly dull. Indeed, no candid critic can deny that this is the case with some of De Foe's narratives ; as, for example, the latter part of *Colonel Jack*, where the details of management of a plantation in Virginia are sufficiently uninteresting, in spite of minute financial details about figures. One device, which he occasionally employs with great force, suggests an occasional source of interest. It is generally reckoned as one of his most skilful tricks that in telling a story he cunningly leaves a few stray ends, which are never taken up. Such is the well-known incident of Xury, in *Robinson Crusoe*. This contrivance undoubtedly gives an appearance of authenticity, by increasing the resemblance to real narratives ; it is like the trick of artificially roughening a stone after it has been fixed into a building to give it the appearance of being fresh from the quarry. De Foe, however, frequently extracts a more valuable piece of service from these loose ends ; they enable him to employ the element of mystery, in which he is otherwise too deficient. Perhaps the most forcible situation in De Foe is that which occurs at the original conclusion of *Roxana*, and which was subsequently damaged by an inferior addition, apparently by another hand. Roxana, after a life of wickedness, is at last married to a substantial merchant. She has saved, from the wages of sin, the convenient sum of 2,056*l.* a year, secured upon excellent mortgages. Her husband has 17,000*l.* in cash, after deducting a "black article of 8,000 pistoles," due on account of a certain lawsuit in Paris, and 1,820*l.* a year in rent. There is a satisfaction about these definite sums which we seldom receive from the vague assertions of modern novelists. Unluckily, a girl turns up at this moment who shows great curiosity about Roxana's history. It soon becomes evident that she is, in fact, Roxana's daughter by a former and long since deserted husband ; but she cannot be acknowledged without a revelation of her mother's subsequently most disreputable conduct. Now Roxana has a devoted maid, who threatens to get rid, by fair means or foul, of this importunate daughter. Once she fails in her design, -but confesses to her mistress that, if necessary, she will commit the murder. Roxana professes to be terribly shocked, but yet has a desire to be relieved at almost any price from her tormentor. The maid thereupon disappears again ; soon afterwards the daughter disappears too ; and Roxana is left in terrible doubt, tormented by the opposing anxieties that her maid may have murdered her daughter, or that her

daughter may have escaped and revealed the mother's true character. Here is a telling situation for a sensation novelist; and the minuteness with which the story is worked out, whilst we are kept in suspense, deserves far more praise than most sensation novelists can claim; to say nothing of the increased effect due to apparent veracity, in which certainly few sensation novelists can even venture a distant competition. The end of the story differs still more widely from modern art. Roxana has to go abroad with her husband, still in a state of doubt. Her maid after a time joins her, but gives no intimation as to the fate of the daughter; and the story concludes by a simple statement that Roxana afterwards fell into well-deserved misery. There is something more impressive, as well as more natural, about the mystery in which the crime is left, than in the most effective solution that could have been contrived; and we devoutly hold that the addition, in which the story is feebly cleared up, is a miserable forgery.

Another instance on a smaller scale of the effective employment of judicious silence, is an incident in *Captain Singleton*. The Quaker of our acquaintance meets with a Japanese priest who speaks a few words of English, and explains that he has learnt it from thirteen Englishmen, the only remnant of thirty-two who had been wrecked on the coast of Japan. To confirm his story, he produces a bit of paper on which is written, in plain English words,—“ We came from Greenland and from the North Pole.” Here are claimants for the discovery of a North-West Passage, and anticipators of Captain Sherard Osborn, of whom we would gladly hear more. Unluckily, when Captain Singleton comes to the place where his Quaker had met the priest, the ship in which he was sailing had departed; and this put an end to an inquiry and perhaps “ may have disappointed mankind of one of the most noble discoveries that ever was made or will again be made, in the world, for the good of mankind in general; but so much for that.”

In these two fragments, which illustrate a very common device of De Foe's, we come across two elements of positive power over our imaginations. First, we have the obvious power excited by an apparent truthfulness, when the story is intrinsically a good one. Of this we shall speak presently. Secondly, we have a specimen of De Foe's peculiar use of the mysterious. And this deserves a somewhat fuller examination. We might, in one sense, count it as a fault in De Foe's method that he is generally too anxious to set everything before us in broad daylight; there is too little of the thoughts and emotions which inhabit the twilight of the mind; of those dim half-seen forms which exercise the strongest influence upon the imagination, and are the most tempting subjects for the poet's art. De Foe, in truth, was little enough of a poet. Sometimes by mere force of terse idiomatic language he rises into real poetry, as it was understood in the days when Pope and Dryden were our lawgivers. It is often really vigorous. The well-known verses,—

Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
The devil always builds a chapel there,—

which begin the *True-Born Englishman*, or the really fine lines which occur in the *Hymn to the Pillory*, that "Hieroglyphic State machine, contrived to punish fancy in," and ending,—

Tell them that placed him here,
They're scandals to the times,
Are at a loss to find his guilt,
And can't commit his crimes,—

may stand for specimens of his best manner. Frequently he degenerates into the merest doggerel, e.g.,—

No man was ever yet so void of sense,
As to debate the right of self-defence,
A principle so grafted in the mind,
With nature born, and does like nature bind ;
Twisted with reason, and with nature too,
As neither one nor t'other can undo,—

which is scarcely a happy specimen of the difficult art of reasoning in verse. His verse is at best vigorous epigrammatic writing, such as would now be converted into leading articles, twisted with more or less violence into rhyme. And yet there is a poetical side to his mind, or at least a susceptibility to poetical impressions of a certain order. And as a novelist is on the border-line between poetry and prose, and novels should be as it were prose saturated with poetry, we may expect to come in this direction upon the secret of De Foe's power. Although, as we have said, De Foe for the most part deals with good tangible subjects which he can weigh and measure and reduce to moidores and pistoles, the mysterious has a very strong though peculiar attraction for him. It seems indeed, to speak paradoxically, that the two qualities are connected. He was urged by a restless curiosity to get away from this commonplace world, and reduce the unknown regions beyond to scale and measure. The centre of Africa, the wilds of Siberia, and even more distinctly the world of spirits, had wonderful charms for him. Nothing would have given him greater pleasure than to determine the exact number of the fallen angels and the date of their calamity. In the *History of the Devil* he touches, with a singular kind of humorous gravity, upon several of these questions, and seems to apologize for his limited information. "Several things," he says, "have been suggested to set us a-calculating the number of this frightful throng of devils who, with Satan the master-devil, was thus cast out of heaven." He declines the task, though he quotes with a certain pleasure the result obtained by a grave calculator, who found that in the first line of Satan's army there were a thousand times a hundred thousand million devils, and more in the other two. He gives a kind of arithmetical measure of the decline of the devil's power by pointing out that "he who was once equal to the angel who killed eighty thousand men in one night, is not able now, without a new commission, to take away the life of one Job." He is filled with curiosity as to the proceedings of the first parliament (p——t as he delicately puts it) of devils; he regrets that as he was not personally present in that "black divan"—at least, not

that he can remember, for who can account for his pre-existent state?—he cannot say what happened; but he adds, “If I had as much personal acquaintance with the devil as would admit it, and could depend upon the truth of what answer he would give me, the first question would be, what measures they (the devils) resolved on at their first assembly?” and the second, how they employed the time between their fall and the creation of the man? Here we see the instinct of the politician; and we may add that De Foe is thoroughly dissatisfied with Milton's statements upon this point though admiring his genius; and goes so far as to write certain verses intended as a correction of, or interpolation into, *Paradise Lost*.

Mr. Ruskin, in comparing Milton's Satan with Dante's, somewhere remarks that the vagueness of Milton, as compared with the accurate measurements given by Dante, is so far a proof of less activity of the imaginative faculty. It is easier to leave the devil's stature uncertain, than to say that he was eighteen feet high. Without disputing the proposition as Mr. Ruskin puts it, we fancy that he would scarcely take De Foe's poetry as an improvement in dignity upon Milton's. We may, perhaps, guess at its merits from this fragment of a speech in prose, addressed to Adam by Eve. “What ails the sot?” says the new termagant. “What are you afraid of? . . . Take it, you fool, and eat . . . Take it, I say, or I will go and cut down the tree, and you shall never eat any of it at all; and you shall still be a fool, and be governed by your wife for ever.” This, and much more gross buffoonery of the same kind, is apparently intended to recommend certain sound moral aphorisms to the vulgar; but the cool arithmetical method by which De Foe investigates the history of the devil, his anxiety to pick up gossip about him, and the view which he takes of him as a very acute and unscrupulous politician—though impartially vindicating him from some of Mr. Milton's aspersions—is exquisitely characteristic.

If we may measure the imaginative power of great poets by the relative merits of their conceptions of Satan, we might find a humbler gauge for inferior capacities in the power of summoning awe-inspiring ghosts. The difficulty of the feat is extreme. Your ghost, as Bottom would have said, is a very fearful wild-fowl to bring upon the stage. He must be handled delicately, or he is spoilt. Amongst living novelists of eminence, Lord Lytton is, so far as we remember, the only one who has boldly dealt with the supernatural. Scott performs the feat with admirable delicacy. The apparition of the old woman in the *Bride of Lammermoor*, and the terrible spectre of the “Bodach Glas,” which appears to Fergus M'Ivor in *Waverley*, are most effective ghosts. They are so skilfully introduced as not to shock our belief, and yet they are more awful beings than the most terrible creations of the raw head and bloody bones school of fiction.

Amongst this school we fear that De Foe must, on the whole, be reckoned. We have already made acquaintance with Mrs. Veal, who, in her ghostly condition, talks for an hour and three-quarters with a gossip

over a cup of tea ; who, indeed, so far forgets her ghostly condition as to ask for a cup of the said tea, and only evades the consequences of her blunder by one of those rather awkward excuses which we all sometimes practise in society ; and who, in short, is the least ethereal spirit that was ever met with outside a table. De Foe's extraordinary love for supernatural stories of the gossiping variety found vent in *A History of Apparitions*, and his *System of Magic*. The position which he takes up is a kind of modified rationalism. He believes that there are genuine apparitions which personate our dead friends, and give us excellent pieces of advice on occasion ; but he refuses to believe that the spirits can appear themselves, on account "of the many strange inconveniences and ill consequences which would happen if the souls of men and women, unembodied and departed, were at liberty to visit the earth." De Foe is evidently as familiar with the habits of spirits generally as of the devil. In that case, for example, the feuds of families would never die, for the injured person would be always coming back to right himself. He proceeds upon this principle to account for many apparitions, as, for example, one which appeared in the likeness of a certain J. O. of the period, and strongly recommended his widow to reduce her expensos. He won't believe that the Virgin appeared to St. Francis, because all stories of that kind are mere impostures of the priests ; but he thinks it very likely that he was haunted by the devil, who may have sometimes taken the Virgin's shape. In the *History of Witchcraft*, De Foe tells us how, as he was once riding in the country, he met a man on the way to inquire of a certain wizard. De Foe, according to his account, which may or may not be intended as authentic, waited the whole of the next day at a public-house in a country-town, in order to hear the result of the inquiry ; and had long conversations, reported in his usual style, with infinite "says he's" and "says I's," in which he tried to prove that the wizard was an impostor. This lets us into the secret of many of De Foe's apparitions. They are the ghosts that frighten villagers as they cross commons late at night, or that rattle chains and display lights in haunted houses. Sometimes they have vexed knavish attorneys by discovering long-hidden deeds. Sometimes they have enticed highwaymen into dark corners of woods, and there the wretched highwayman finds in their bags (for ghosts of this breed have good substantial luggage) nothing but a halter and a bit of silver (value exactly 18*sd.*) to pay the hangman. When they turn to the owner, he has vanished. Occasionally, they are the legends told by some passing traveller from distant lands—probably, genuine superstitions in their origin, but amplified by tradition into marvellous exactitude of detail, and garnished with long gossiping conversations. Such a ghost, which, on the whole, is our favourite, is the mysterious Owke Mouraski. This being, whether devil or good spirit no man knows, accompanied a traveller for four years through the steppes of Russia, and across Norway, Turkey, and various other countries. On the march, he was always seen a mile to the left of the party, keeping parallel with them, in glorious indifference

to roads. He crossed rivers without bridges, and the sea without ships. Everywhere, in the wild countries, he was known by name and dreaded ; for, if he entered a house, some one would die there within the year. Yet, he was good to the traveller, going so far, indeed, on one occasion, as to lend him a horse, and frequently treating him to good advice. Towards the end of the journey, Owke Mouraski informed his companion that he was "the inhabitant of an invisible region," and afterwards became very familiar with him—the traveller, indeed, would never believe that his friend was a devil, a scepticism of which De Foe doubtfully approves. The story, however, must be true, because, as De Foe says, he saw it in manuscript many years ago ; and certainly Owke is of a superior order to most of the pot-house ghosts.

De Foe, doubtless, had an insatiable appetite for legends of this kind, talked about them with infinite zest in innumerable gossips, and probably smoked pipes and consumed ale in abundance during the process. The ghosts are the substantial creations of the popular fancy, which no longer nourished itself upon a genuine faith in a more lofty order of spiritual beings. It is superstition become gross and vulgar before it disappears for ever. Romance and poetry have pretty well departed from them as from the witches of the period, who are little better than those who still linger in our country villages and fill corners of newspapers headed, "Superstition in the nineteenth century." In his novels, De Foe's instinct for probability generally enables him to employ the marvellous moderately, and, therefore, effectively ; he is specially given to dreams ; they are generally verified just enough to leave us the choice of credulity or scepticism, and are in excellent keeping with the supposed narrator. Roxana tells us how one morning she suddenly sees her lover's face as though it were a death's-head, and his clothes covered with blood. In the evening the lover is murdered. One of Moll Flanders' husbands hears her call him at a distance of many miles—a superstition, by the way, in which Boswell, if not Johnson, fully believed. De Foe shows his usual skill in sometimes making the visions or omens fail of a too close fulfilment, as in the excellent dream where Robinson Crusoe hears Friday's father tell him of the sailors' attempt to murder the Spaniards : no part of the dream, as he says, is specifically true, though it has a general truth ; and hence we may, at our choice, suppose it to have been supernatural, or to be merely a natural result of Crusoe's anxiety. This region of the marvellous, however, only affects De Foe's novels in a subordinate degree. The Owke Mouraski suggests another field in which a lover of the mysterious could then find room for his imagination. The world still presented a boundless wilderness of untravelled land. Mapped and explored territory was still a bright spot surrounded by chaotic darkness, instead of the two being in the reverse proportions. Geographers might fill up huge tracts by writing "here is much gold," or putting "elephants instead of towns." De Foe's gossiping acquaintance, when they were tired of ghosts, could tell of strange adventures in wild seas, where merchantmen followed a narrow

track, exposed to the assaults of pirates ; or of long journeys over endless steppes in the days when travelling was travelling indeed ; when distances were reckoned by months, and men might expect to meet undiscovered tribes and monsters unimagined by natural historians. Doubtless he had listened greedily to the stories of seafaring men and merchants from the Gold Coast or the East. *Captain Singleton*, to omit *Robinson Crusoe* for the present, shows the form into which these stories moulded themselves in his mind. Singleton, besides his other exploits, anticipated Livingstone in crossing Africa from sea to sea. One of De Foe's biographers rather unnecessarily admires the marvellous way in which his imaginary descriptions have been confirmed by later travellers. And it is true that Singleton found two great lakes, which may, if we please, be identified with those of recent discoverers. His other guesses are not surprising. As a specimen of the mode in which he filled up the unknown space we may mention that he covers the desert "with a kind of thick moss of a blackish dead colour," which is not a very impressive phenomenon. It is in the matter of wild beasts, however, that he comes out strongest. Their camp is in one place surrounded by "innumerable numbers of devilish creatures." These creatures were as "thick as a drove of bullocks coming to a fair," so that they could not fire without hitting some ; in fact, a volley brought down three tigers and two wolves, besides one creature "of an ill-gendered kind, between a tiger and a leopard." Before long they meet an "ugly, venomous, deformed kind of a snake or serpent," which had "a hellish, ugly, deformed look and voice;" indeed, they would have recognized in it the being who most haunted De Foe's imaginary world—the devil—except that they could not think what business the devil could have where there were no people. The fauna of this country, besides innumerable lions, tigers, leopards, and elephants, comprised "living creatures as big as calves, but not of that kind," and creatures between a buffalo and a deer, which resembled neither ; they had no horns, but legs like a cow, with a fine head and neck, like a deer. The "ill-gendered" beast is an admirable specimen of De Foe's workmanship. It shows his moderation under most tempting circumstances. No dog-headed men, no men with eyes in their breasts, or feet that serve as umbrellas, will suit him. He must have something new, and yet probable ; and he hits upon a very serviceable animal in this mixture between a tiger and a leopard. Surely no one could refuse to honour such a moderate draft upon his imagination. In short, De Foe, even in the wildest of regions, where his pencil might have full play, sticks closely to the commonplace, and will not venture beyond the regions of the easily conceivable.

The final element in which De Foe's curiosity might find a congenial food consisted of the stories floating about contemporary affairs. He had talked with men who had fought in the Great Rebellion, or even in the old German wars. He had himself been out with Monmouth, and taken part in the fight at Sedgemoor. Doubtless that small experience of actual warfare gave additional vivacity to his descriptions of battles, and was useful to him, as Gibbon declares that his service with the militia was of

some assistance in describing armies of a very different kind. There is a period in history which has a peculiar interest for all of us. It is that which lies upon the border-land between the past and present ; which has gathered some romance from the lapse of time, and yet is not so far off but that we have seen some of the actors, and can distinctly realize the scenes in which they took part. Such to the present generation is the era of the Revolutionary Wars. "Old men still creep among us" who lived through that period of peril and excitement, and yet we are far enough removed from them to fancy that there were giants in those days. It is of this source of interest that Scott availed himself in *Waverley; or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since*. That date just fixes the time after which the epoch must be handed over to the historical novelist ; when few even of the greatest novelists have sufficient imaginative fire to burn up the antiquarian dust that has accumulated. When De Foe wrote his novels the battles of the great Civil War and the calamities of the Plague were passing through this phase ; and to them we owe two of his most interesting books, the *Memoirs of a Cavalier* and the *History of the Plague*.

To resume then : we have now arrived at some estimate of De Foe's peculiar power. He was a shrewd and most energetic politician, of very high rank amongst the second order, though never distinctly passing into the first rank. His writings have not the exalted merit which belongs to the few men who, from the passing incidents of their time, have struck out truths of everlasting value. They have, however, the very rare merit of originality, and distinct grasp of principles, which enable a man on the whole to be clearly ahead of his generation, and to see through the fallacies raised by party-passion. If he was not above the heads of his ablest contemporaries, he held a straight course in spite of them, and followed his own path without flinching or fear. He showed the distinctive merits of a sturdy, middle-class Englishman, with a keen perception of a certain order—not perhaps the highest order—of truths, but without any high intellectual polish : in these days some people would have called him a Philistine. When he began to write his novels he had fought a long and most honourable political warfare ; he had known persons in every rank of life from the prison upwards, and his mind was full of long and varied experience of men and things. He had, as we fancy, an insatiable curiosity for facts of all kinds, especially for anything that bordered upon the odd and the marvellous. In telling stories, or rather in spinning yarns—for that is the most appropriate term for his style of narration—he uses just the homely, racy language of his class. He revels in elaborate ramblings and roundabout conversations, with the indiscriminating delight in all sorts of irrelevant details which a country gossip might display by an ale-house fire, or a sailor in a dull watch. His style, in short, was just a suspicion of that which Shakspeare has immortalized in Mrs. Quickly, or Fielding in Partridge, or innumerable other writers in describing the same class of life. He was evidently a very keen and penetrating observer of men and things ; but was totally devoid of that delicate sensibility and quickness of

sympathy by which we are enabled to see through other men's eyes, and to catch shades of emotion which are different from our own. One man to him was very much like another, except that they were placed in an infinite variety of differing situations ; or, perhaps, it would be fairer to say that he was content with looking from the external point of view in his stories ; and thought that the purpose of a story-teller was to amuse us, like Punch, with the antics of a series of puppets, not to dissect them, and analyze their motives. At any rate, he shows extraordinary knowledge of human life, without much pretence to knowledge of the human heart. We must add a strong dash of dry humour. One of the most characteristic stories which he tells of himself, shows how, as a boy, he entered a public-house where certain wise politicians were discussing a report—scarcely credible—that the Papists had tried, in the night, to carry off the Monument. De Foe assured them that it was true, and that if they went there, they would see men engaged in fastening it down again in its place. The picturesque touch convinced them.

When such a man spins us a yarn, the conditions of its being interesting are tolerably simple. The first condition obviously is, that the plot must be a good one, and good in the sense that a representation in dumb-show must be sufficiently exciting, without the necessity of any explanation of motives. The novel of sentiment or passion or character would be altogether beyond his scope. He will accumulate any number of facts and details ; but they must be such as will speak for themselves, without the need of an interpreter. For this reason, we do not imagine that *Roxana*, *Moll Flanders*, *Colonel Jack*, or *Captain Singleton* can ever be very interesting. In each of them there are one or two forcible situations. *Roxana* pursued by her daughter, *Moll Flanders* in prison, and *Colonel Jack* as a young boy of the streets, are all powerful fragments, and well adapted for his peculiar method. He goes on heaping up little significant facts, till we are able to realize the situation powerfully, and we may then supply the sentiment for ourselves. But he never seems to know his own strength. He gives us at equal length, and with the utmost plain-speaking, the details of a number of other positions, which are neither interesting nor edifying. He is decent or coarse, just as he is dull or amusing, without knowing the difference. He is certainly not immoral in the sense in which modern French novels are immoral ; but he is coarse, as it were by accident, when his characters happen to fall into awkward positions. The details about the different connections formed by *Roxana* and *Moll Flanders* have no atom of sentiment, and are about as wearisome as the journal of a specially heartless lady of the same character would be at the present day. He has been praised for never gilding objectionable objects, or making vice attractive. To all appearance, he would have been totally unable to set about it. He has only one mode of telling a story, and he follows the thread of his narrative into the back-slums of London, or lodging-houses of doubtful character, or respectable places of trade, with the same equanimity, at a good steady jog-trot of narrative.

His absence of any passion or sentiment deprives such places of the one possible source of interest ; and we must confess that two-thirds of each of these novels are deadly dull ; the remainder, though exhibiting specimens of his genuine power, is not far enough from the commonplace to be specially attractive. In short, the merit of De Foe's narrative bears a direct proportion to the intrinsic merit of a plain statement of the facts ; and, in the novels already mentioned, as there is nothing very surprising, certainly nothing unique, about the story, his treatment cannot raise it above a very moderate level.

Above these stories, in our opinion, come two of De Foe's fragments of fictitious history. *Captain Carleton*, although we freely confess that but for Lord Stanhope's authority we should have taken it for a genuine piece of De Foe, seems to be inferior in vivacity. If De Foe was making use of authentic papers, he was, perhaps, under some sense of restraint. There are, however, some forcible passages, especially at the beginning—one, for example, where the author goes into a cottage, near the scene of war, and finds the body of a marauder, who has been burnt by the country-people, in revenge for maltreatment, is an effective touch in the true De Foe manner. The *Memoir of a Cavalier* is a very amusing book, though it is less fiction than history, interspersed with a few personal anecdotes. In it there are again some exquisite little bits of genuine De Foe. The Cavalier tells us, with such admirable frankness, that he once left the army a day or two before a battle, in order to visit some relatives at Bath, and excuses himself so modestly for his apparent neglect of military duty, that we cannot refuse to believe in him. A novelist, we say, would have certainly taken us to the battle, or would, at least, have given his hero a more heroic excuse. The character, too, of the old soldier, who has served under Gustavus Adolphus, who is disgusted with the raw English levies, still more disgusted with the interference of Parsons, and who has a respect for his opponents—especially Sir Thomas Fairfax—which is compounded partly of English love of fair play, and partly of the indifference of a professional officer—is better supported than most of De Foe's personages. An excellent Dugald Dalgetty touch is his constant anxiety to impress upon the royalist commanders the importance of a particular trick which he has learnt abroad of mixing foot soldiers with the cavalry. We must leave him, however, to say a few words upon the *History of the Plague*, which seems to us to come next in merit to *Robinson Crusoe*. Here De Foe has to deal with a story of such intrinsically tragic interest that all his details become affecting. It needs no commentary to interpret the meaning of the terrible anecdotes, many of which are doubtless founded on fact. There is the strange superstitious element brought out by the horror of the sudden visitation. The supposed writer hesitates as to leaving the doomed city. He is decided to stay at last by opening the Bible at random and coming upon the text,—“He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.” He watches the comets ; the one which appeared before the plague was “of a dull,

languid colour, and its motion heavy, solemn, and slow ; " the other, which preceded the Great Fire, was " bright and sparkling, and its motion swift and furious." Old women, he says, believed in them, especially " the hypochondriac part of the other sex," who might, he thinks, be called old women too. Still he half believes himself, especially when the second appears. He does not believe that the breath of the plague-stricken upon a glass would leave shapes of " dragons, snakes, and devils, horrible to behold ; " but he does believe that if they breathed on a bird they would kill it, or " at least make its eggs rotten." However, he admits that no experiments were tried. Then we have the hideous, and sometimes horribly grotesque incidents. There is the poor naked creature, who runs up and down, exclaiming continually, " Oh, the great and the dreadful God ! " but would say nothing else, and speak to no one. There is the woman who suddenly opens a window, and " calls out, ' Death, death, death ! ' in a most inimitable tone, which struck me with horror and chillness in the very blood." There is the man who, with death in his face, opens the door to a young apprentice sent to ask him for money : " Very well, child," says the living ghost ; " go to Cripplegate Church, and bid them ring the bell for me ; " and with those words, shuts the door, goes upstairs and dies. Then we have the horrors of the dead-cart, and the unlucky piper who was carried off by mistake. De Foe, with his usual ingenuity, corrects the inaccurate versions of the story, and says that the piper was not blind, but only old and silly ; and that he does not believe that, as " the story goes," he set up his pipes while in the cart. After this, we cannot refuse to admit that he was really carried off and all but buried. Another device for cheating us with acceptance of his story, is the ingenious way in which he imitates the occasional lapses of memory of a genuine narrator, and admits that he does not precisely recollect certain details ; and still better is the conscientious eagerness with which he distinguishes between the occurrences to which he was an eye-witness and those which he only knew by hearsay.

This book, more than any of the others, shows a skill in selecting telling incidents. We are sometimes in doubt whether the particular details which occur in other stories are not put in rather by good luck than from a due perception of their value. He thus resembles a savage, who is as much pleased with a glass bead as with a piece of gold ; but in the *History of the Plague* every detail goes straight to the mark. At one point he cannot help diverging into the story of three poor men who escape into the fields, and giving us, with his usual relish, all their rambling conversations by the way. For the most part, however, he is less diffusive and more pointed than usual ; the greatness of the calamity seems to have given more intensity to his style ; and it leaves all the impression of a genuine narrative, told by one who has, as it were, just escaped from the valley of the shadow of death, with the awe still upon him, and every terrible sight and sound fresh in his memory. The amazing truthfulness of the style is here in its proper place ; we wish to be brought as near as may be

to the facts ; we want good realistic painting more than fine sentiment. The story reminds us of certain ghastly photographs published during the American war, which had been taken on the field of battle. They gave a more forcible taste of the horrors of war than the most thrilling pictures drawn from the fancy. In such cases, we only wish the narrator to stand as much as possible on one side, and just draw up a bit of the curtain which conceals his gallery of horrors.

It is time, however, to say enough of *Robinson Crusoe* to justify its traditional superiority to De Foe's other writings. The charm, as some critics say, is difficult to analyze ; and we do not profess to demonstrate mathematically that it must necessarily be, what it is, the most delightful boy's book ever written, and one which older critics may study with delight. The most obvious advantage over the secondary novels lies in the unique situation. Lamb, in the passage from which we have quoted, gracefully evades this point. "Are there no solitudes," he says, "out of the cave and the desert? or cannot the heart, in the midst of crowds, feel frightfully alone?" Singleton, he suggests, is alone with pirates less merciful than the howling monsters, the devilish serpents, and ill-gendered creatures of De Foe's deserts. Colonel Jack is alone amidst the London thieves, when he goes to bury his treasures in the hollow tree. This is prettily said ; but it suggests rather what another writer might have made of De Foe's heroes, than what De Foe made of them himself. Singleton, it is true, is alone amongst the pirates, but he takes to them as naturally as a fish takes to the water, and, indeed, finds them good, honest, respectable, stupid sort of people. They stick by him and he by them, and we are never made to feel the real horrors of his position. Colonel Jack might, in other hands, have become an Oliver Twist, less real perhaps than De Foe has made him, but infinitely more pathetic. De Foe tells us of his unpleasant sleeping-places, and his occasional fears of the gallows ; but of the supposed mental struggles, of the awful solitude of soul, we hear nothing. How can we sympathise very deeply with a young gentleman whose recollections run chiefly upon the exact numbers of shillings and pence captured by himself and his pocket-picking "pals ?" Similarly Robinson Crusoe dwells but little upon the horrors of his position, and when he does is apt to get extremely prosy. We fancy that he could never have been in want of a solid sermon on Sunday, however much he may have missed the church-going bell. But in *Robinson Crusoe*, as in the *History of the Plague*, the story speaks for itself. To explain the horrors of living among thieves we must have some picture of internal struggles, of a sense of honour opposed to temptation, and a pure mind in danger of contamination. De Foe's extremely straightforward and prosaic view of life prevents him from setting any such sentimental trials before us ; the lad avoids the gallows and in time becomes the honest master of a good plantation ; and there's enough. But the horrors of abandonment on a desert island can be appreciated by the simplest sailor or schoolboy. The main thing is to bring out the situation plainly and

forcibly, to tell us of the difficulties of making pots and pans, of catching goats, and sowing corn, and of avoiding audacious cannibals. This task De Foe performs with unequalled spirit and vivacity. In his first discovery of a new art he shows the freshness so often conspicuous in first novels. The scenery was just that which had peculiar charms for his fancy ; it was one of those half-true legends of which he had heard strange stories from seafaring men, and possibly from the acquaintances of his hero himself. He brings out the shrewd vigorous character of the Englishman thrown upon his own resources with evident enjoyment of his task. Indeed, De Foe tells us himself that in *Robinson Crusoe* he saw a kind of allegory of his own fate. He had suffered from solitude of soul. Confinement in his prison is represented in the book by confinement in an island ; and even particular incidents, such as the fright he receives one night from something in his bed, "was word for word a history of what happened." In other words, this novel too, like many of the best ever written, has in it something of the autobiographical element which makes a man speak from greater depths of feeling than in a purely imaginary story.

It would indeed be easy to show that the story, though in one sense marvellously like truth, is singularly wanting as a psychological study. Friday is no real savage, but a good English servant without plush. He says "muhee" and "speakee," but he becomes at once a civilized being, and in his first conversation puzzles Crusoe terribly by that awkward theological question, why God did not kill the devil—for characteristically enough Crusoe's first lesson includes a little instruction upon the enemy of mankind. He found, however, that it was "not so easy to imprint right notions in Friday's mind about the devil, as it was about the being of a God." This is comparatively a trifle ; but Crusoe himself is all but impossible. Steele, indeed, gives an account of Selkirk from which he infers that, "this plain man's story is a memorable example that he is happiest who confines his wants to natural necessities ;" but the facts do not warrant this pet doctrine of an old-fashioned school. Selkirk's state of mind may be inferred from two or three facts. He had almost forgotten to talk ; he had learnt to catch goats by running on foot ; and he had acquired the exceedingly difficult art of making fire by rubbing two sticks. In other words, his whole mind was absorbed in providing a few physical necessities, and he was rapidly becoming a savage—for a man who can't speak and can make fire, is very near the Australian. We may infer, what is probable from other cases, that a man living fifteen years by himself, like Crusoe, would either go mad, or sink into that semi-savage state. De Foe really describes a man in prison, not in solitary confinement. We should not be so pedantic as to call for accuracy in such matters ; but the difference between the fiction and what we believe would have been the reality is significant. De Foe, even in *Robinson Crusoe*, gives a very inadequate picture of the mental torments to which his hero is exposed. He is frightened by a parrot calling him by

name, and by the strangely picturesque incident of the footprint on the sand ; but, on the whole, he takes his imprisonment with preternatural stolidity. His stay on the island produces the same state of mind as might be due to a dull Sunday in Scotland. For this reason, the want of power in describing emotion as compared with the amazing power of describing facts, *Robinson Crusoe* is a book for boys rather than men, and, as Lamb says, for the kitchen rather than for higher circles. It falls short of any high intellectual interest. When we leave the striking situation and get to the second part, with the Spaniards and Will Atkins talking natural theology to his wife, it sinks to the level of the secondary stories. But for people who are not too proud to take a rather low order of amusement, *Robinson Crusoe* will always be one of the most charming of books. We have the romantic and adventurous incidents upon which the most unflinching realism can be set to work without danger of vulgarity. Here is precisely the story suited to De Foe's strength and weakness. He is forced to be artistic in spite of himself. He cannot lose the thread of the narrative and break it into disjointed fragments, for the limits of the island confine him as well as his hero. He cannot tire us with details, for all the details of such a story are interesting ; it is made up of petty incidents, as much as the life of a prisoner reduced to taming flies, or making saws out of penknives. The island does as well as the Bastille for making trifles valuable to the sufferer and to us. The facts tell the story of themselves, without any demand for romantic power to press them home to us ; and the efforts to give an air of authenticity to the story, which sometimes make us smile, and sometimes rather bore us, in other novels, are all to the purpose ; for there is a real point in putting such a story in the mouth of the sufferer, and in giving us for the time an illusory belief in his reality. It is one of the exceptional cases in which the poetical aspect of a position is brought out best by the most prosaic accuracy of detail ; and we imagine that *Robinson Crusoe's* island, with all his small household torments, will always be more impressive than the more gorgeously coloured island of Enoch Arden. When we add that the whole book shows the freshness of a writer employed on his first novel—though at the mature age of fifty-eight ; seeing in it an allegory of his own experience embodied in the scenes which most interested his imagination, we see some reasons why *Robinson Crusoe* should hold a distinct rank by itself amongst his works. As De Foe was a man of very powerful, but very limited, imagination—able to see certain aspects of things with extraordinary distinctness, but little able to rise above them—even his greatest book shows his weakness, and scarcely satisfies a grown-up man with a taste for high art. In revenge, it ought, according to Rousseau, to be for a time the whole library of a boy, chiefly, it seems, to teach him that the stock of an ironmonger is better than that of an iron shop. We may agree in the conclusion without caring about the reason ; and to have pleased all the boys in Europe for near a hundred and fifty years is, after all, a remarkable feat.

Roe-Shooting in the Black Forest.

RISING to dress by candle-light, peering out into the darkness to discern the state of the weather, snatching a hurried and imperfect breakfast, driving in a cramped conveyance along a dull white road between long and silent stretches of forest, with the damp grey night-mist still dragging slowly over the firs, and with the cold barrels of a gun numbing one's fingers—such are the ordinary preliminaries to a day's shooting common alike to many parts of England and Germany. But with the break of day all further resemblance ceases. When the hot strong sun of the south gathers up these mist-clouds and sends them rolling away westward, when the hills along the horizon begin to show themselves of a gloomy green instead of that thin blue which surrounds an English landscape, when a clearance in the great forest around you shows you a large, many-windowed, projecting-roofed wooden châlet, as ruddy in its deep brown hues as any hut of the Swiss valleys, you are led to expect something entirely different from the steady, business-like, and rather tame pursuit of partridges which generally follows the drive to cover in England. A hen capercailzie, with her great brown wings outstretched, sails quickly overhead; a fox stands quietly in an adjacent field and watches you drive past; a blue hare flashes across the road and disappears into the wood: no, this is clearly not England.

But the drive over, what then? Another of those great wooden châlets comes into view, the strong sunlight making its rich brown gables almost red, and there are people walking about, and vehicles in front of the door, and over the window a noble painting bearing the legend "Zum weissen Adler." Those boys outside have borrowed a holiday from the national school, which they must attend, to form a corps of beaters; and they are already receiving jerked and half-grumbling instructions from one of the Prince's keepers—the ancient, phlegmatic, morose, and picturesque Schaller. Imagine a little man dressed wholly in grey and green, with a large slouched hat adorned with jay's feathers, with a thin brownish-white face, a large nose, a large black moustache and small deep-set eyes, with a horn slung round his neck, a gun pendent from one shoulder, and a cartridge-bag of roe-skin hanging from the other. He looks as if he had been the companion of Robin Hood and Little John, and had gone on smoking that big pipe ever since, until he had so steeped himself in nicotine that Time had become afraid to touch him. He is one of the oldest, and most experienced of the Prince's keepers—the Prince von Fürstenberg, who owns as much of the Black Forest as would make ~~an~~

English county—and it is his proud boast that of all his companions he is the only one whom the Prince addresses as “Du.” The other keepers are inside, in the spacious, low-roofed, eight-windowed room which is the chief glory of each small hostelry: and through the haze of badly-smelling tobacco-smoke we can dimly discern their short, brawny figures clad in the same picturesque dress which Schaller wears, though for the most part they have bushy brown beards and moustaches on their sun-tanned faces.

In a little while our party is mustered on the road outside. E——, the Prince’s overseer for this district, a splendid fellow with immense shoulders and arms, leads the way, attended by the two or three sportsmen who have responded to his invitation. There is K——, the landlord of the inn at Hubertshofen; there is a young Bavarian whose sporting costume—his gaiters, hat, jacket, horn, pouch, and killing knife—is perfect; there is a small, thin doctor, with spectacles, who is always asking questions about the wind; and with myself there comes S——, a gentle English youth, whose eyes somehow will wander backward in the direction of the Hubertshofen inn, where she of the flaxen curls and azure eyes remains to mope in the hopeless dulness of feminine companionship until we send for her in the afternoon.

“ Vorwärts, alle, in Gottes Namen! ” shouts out E——, as he slings his gun (every gun has a green strap affixed) over his big shoulder, and strides forth.

The slight wind now blowing blows in the direction whither we are going: it is necessary, therefore, to go to the extreme end of the ground to be traversed and work backward. There are few animals which have so intensely keen a scent as the roe; and the greatest caution has to be exercised in order to keep to leeward of them. In some districts where the roe lie in small covers and are apt to be scared away altogether if driven much and hard by dogs, it is deemed sufficient to send in a few beaters who do not even make the peculiar rattling noise with which they ordinarily arouse the deer. The mere scent of the beaters is enough to send the roe on lightly towards the sportsman, who in such a case generally gets an easy shot. But on this morning we were plentifully provided with dogs—about the most ludicrous-looking animals of which one can conceive. These beagles, having heads of the usual beagle size, seem to have little body and no legs. The latter are merely squat stumps, exceedingly thick and muscular, with large, soft, out-turning paws, which make the animal walk like a turtle. The dogs possess the advantage of running slowly and steadily, and never tire; while they make their way through the mossy swamps, the blackberry-bushes and brackens of the forest much more easily than one would imagine. E——, however, had with him a huge black hound, a brute of evil aspect, but of immense power, which was supposed to be invaluable for tracking wounded deer. How Hector displayed his peculiar idiosyncrasies shall be described hereafter.

"Gentlemen," says E——, in that fine, broad, Bavarian German which is so different from the horrible patois of the Black Foresters, "whosoever shoots an old hare shall be fined thirty-five kreutzers, to be exacted from him on the spot. Young hares you may shoot as you please."

This being a Black Forest joke, everybody laughs ; though it is already understood among us that not only are we forbidden to shoot does, but that capercailzie and foxes, being the pet shooting of the Prince himself, are also to be spared. Let it shock no one's feelings to hear of foxes being considered good shooting. Here they are never hunted ; and as they are most destructive vermin, killing the young roe in considerable numbers, and even attacking their mothers when snow is on the ground, the sportsman is accounted fortunate who comes home singing "Der Fuchs laszt mir sein Kleid."

Suddenly the whole party come to a halt. The keepers clustering around E——, and watching the pointing of his hand with those grave, keen, sunburnt faces of theirs, receive each his appointed place and directions. Schaller draws off his troop of men, boys, and dogs ; and disappears in the forest. E——, having specified all our posts, gives another but more subdued "Vorwärts!" and we too enter the forest by a neighbouring path.

Here there is no underwood. Down between the lichen-grey stems of the magnificent pines and firs, the sun-light falls in great shafts, and lights up the soft, spongy green moss into a brilliant orange and gold. Occasionally we cross a deep glade, which runs down into an unseen valley ; and in one of these glades the underwood begins. Our posts are given us. In all beats there are one or two stations which are known by long experience to be the best ; the preferable of these two, called the "*Haupt-platz*," being generally marked with a bit of stick which has a red F upon it to denote that here the Prince himself stands. S—— and I distinctly heard E—— tell the keepers that in every beat these two best places were to be given to the two Englishmen, the "*Haupt-platz*" to be given to each alternately.

"*Bleiben Sie da*," says one of the keepers to S—— (pronouncing the words "*blaybe Sie daw*"), and my friend found himself posted behind a large pine, about twenty yards from the underwood of larch and birch, and almost opposite two deer-tracks which converged to one point. He had the "*Haupt-platz*."

I had the next position, about fifty yards further on ; but I was placed on an incline from which I could easily look down on the movements of my friend. So soon as all the posts have been occupied, each man must hold up his hand and convey to his next neighbour an intimation of his exact position ; a duty which no one who has had a charge of No. 2 shot pass by his ear will ever neglect. Presently we heard a long low blast from the horn of the keeper who was at the extreme end of the guns—a message to the venerable Schaller telling him to begin the driving. This

message was replied to by a fine florid flourish from Schaller himself; and it is not until the latter signal is given that the guns are supposed to be on the alert.

S——, who had been sitting down, sprung to his feet; and for a few minutes he was all attention. Far off we could hear the drivers at work, striking the trees with sticks and uttering a loud "purr," that echoed through the wood. All around us was dead silence, but for the bees in the harebells and the occasional flutter past of a jay. Then, with a noise that must have made many a heart leap, two of the dogs simultaneously gave tongue, and the sharp harsh bark rang through the stillness of the wood, but was yet far distant. We could hear the sounds become fainter or louder, and could trace in imagination the course of the dogs as they went off in different directions. Then—and what a strange sensation it is when you see your first deer; when out of the perfect silence of the tall brushwood leaps a beautiful young creature in a shining coat of yellowish-brown—then there suddenly flashed into the sunlight, not thirty yards from where S—— stood, a handsome buck. Had the buck continued his course he would have run straight over my friend; consequently he stopped short, paused in a bewildered manner for at least two seconds, and then with one or two light bounds over the ferns, he was away down into the glade and out of sight.

What of S——? A second or two before the buck had come into sight I distinctly saw my neighbour open a locket which hung from his watch-chain. I did not know what was in the locket, though I guessed; and I am sure there could be nothing so remarkable about a little flaxen hair as to cause a man to shift his gun to his left arm in the very middle of a drive. When the buck leapt out into the sunlight, S—— started, so that I saw him fifty yards off throw up his head. Then he raised the gun to his shoulder; but whether his hand trembled too much with the fright, or whether he was himself too much confused, he did not fire, and the buck, which had a fine pair of horns, escaped. I noticed a quick glance S—— sent in my direction to see whether I had observed this disgraceful proceeding; and, as he caught my eye, he shrugged his shoulders. At the same moment one of the small beagles, yelping and barking, came along the same track, and as he arrived at the spot where the deer had passed, he looked up at S—— with a glance which must have caused my friend, if he possessed the least conscience, to blush deeply.

The roe, as St. John observes, is the most symmetrical and beautiful in shape of all deer; and I had soon an opportunity of witnessing the peculiarly light and graceful manner in which the doe, especially, clears the underwood in running. Hector, baying and rushing like a fiend, chased out two does and a little fawn which was not much longer in body than a hare. The first doe passed through the trees like a flash of lightning; but the second one, evidently the mother of this little thing, kept by its side, and both of them came so near me that I believe I could have killed them both with one barrel. It is indeed impossible to describe

the delicate way in which these graceful creatures run, their long, thin necks holding their small head well up, their ears pricked and full, their thin lithe legs making not the slightest noise as they canter or bound over the yielding moss and fern. In a short time the noise of the beaters came nearer; and soon thereafter the boys were seen to be struggling through the young firs, when a blast from somebody's horn took us in a body to where E—— was waiting.

Here, then, was a pretty ordeal for S——. When the whole party is collected, all the incidents of the drive are recounted; and unfortunately several of the beaters, having observed this buck, declared that he had fine horns, and that he made straight for the "*Haupt-platz*."

"Ja, ja," says S——, stammering and blushing. "Ich habe Sie—I mean ich habe ihn gesehen, aber—aber er ging zu schnell fur mich zu—zu—"

And as he forgot the German word for "shoot" he elevated his gun and performed a little bit of pantomime which was quite satisfactory. If there was any philological process going on within the brains of the keepers, it must have been the effort to find the German equivalent for "duffor."

The next beat proved a blank; only a few does having been turned out by the dogs. I was much amused, however, by the utter paralysis which struck one of these pretty creatures which had come to within a dozen yards of me before she saw me. The deer, it must be remembered, have no apprehension for anything in front of them; their intense anxiety to catch the sounds behind them and escape their pursuers causes them to be careless to an incredible degree of danger which may be simply confronting them. This doe had come down a deer-path which led straight towards the "*Haupt-platz*"; and did not observe me at all, as I say, until she was within pistol-shot. On catching sight of me, and of the gun which I held, she went back a little on her haunches, and then stood and looked with a sort of helpless, frightened stare. Certainly three seconds elapsed before she suddenly darted off to the left; and I saw every muscle in her hind thighs working as she put on her best speed. In her path she started a fox, which came right back in the opposite direction—an easy shot for the Prince, had he been there.

In our next beat we were more successful. The driving had scarcely begun when one of the dogs gave tongue; and the longer the loud barking continued the more nearly did it approach the station which S—— had assigned to him. Evidently the roe was coming in a direct line, making none of those circuitous manœuvres with which the old bucks so often baffle the dogs. S—— was in the middle of a long and narrow path, with dense wood before and behind him, except for a little clearance of about thirty square yards which lay further down the path, and which was partially hid from him by some young larches. Making sure that the deer was coming on towards this clearance, S—— risked the indiscretion of leaving his post, and passed on until only one small tree stood between

him and the open space. Behind the dense branches of the young fir he ensconced himself, and had scarcely done so when there was heard a rustling of the underwood at no great distance. Almost at the same moment I caught a glimpse of a pair of horns above the young trees in front, and saw that the buck would come straight across the clearance. The unhappy animal had just leapt out from the bushes when my friend fired; I heard a shrill scream that had a painful resemblance to a human cry; the buck made one forward bound high in the air, and then fell heavily upon the ground. S—— did not stir from his position; but I could see that, after a kick or two, the buck was lying quite still, and therefore dead, among the soft grey grass.

The killing of the deer, however, was but a trivial portion of the ceremonies which now ensued. The drive over, up comes the nearest keeper, and with profuse and almost unintelligible Black-Forest German (as it is called by the people themselves) must needs shake hands with S—— and congratulate him on having secured a good pair of horns, which he immediately proceeds to examine by lifting up the head of the slain deer. Then he blows a triumphant tootle-too upon his horn, and while the other keepers are slowly making their appearance (each of them taking off his green beaver, shaking hands with S—— and smiling proudly, as if to see a dead buck shot by a stranger was the greatest pleasure that could be afforded them,) he steps aside and selects a bit of young fir which he proceeds to stick in my friend's hat. It is the custom to decorate you with one of these trophies for every buck you shoot, and with another sort of trophy for every one you miss; so that the village-people, on turning out in the evening to meet the party coming home, can tell who have been the fortunate and who the unlucky marksmen.

How proud S—— looked! He positively blushed. He looked at the deer and said, "Poor thing!" though he would have uttered another exclamation had the poor thing escaped. He was in quite a flutter of excitement, and his efforts to appear composed and not too exuberantly glad were on the whole a failure. By-and-by he ceased contemplating the stricken deer, and, coming over to me, said—

"Don't you think we might send for the ladies now? The forest is not at all damp, and I'm sure they could go with us without incurring the least danger. And then all these ceremonies, you know, though a little absurd, are interesting."

Therewith my young friend touched the small green branch in his cap to see if it was securely fixed; and now, as all the party had arrived and seemed desirous of resting themselves, we sat down upon two or three immense felled trees. One of the keepers, kneeling down by the buck, proceeded to disembowel him; and that rather ugly operation having been accomplished, the deer was slung round the shoulders of one of the boys, who was directed to return with it to Hubertshofen.

"And sehen Sie," says S—— (the boy looked up with surprise, pro-

bably never before having been addressed as "Sie") "sagen an den—den zwei Damen dass sie—sie—here, come and tell this fellow to bring back the two ladies with him!"

How a London boy would have sniggered at the ridiculous attempts of the foreigner; but this swarthy-faced lad, with the big soft black eyes, with his red cotton jacket stained here and there by the blood of the dead buck, which hung picturesquely round his neck, only waited in respectful silence until the command was delivered to him, and then departed.

Again we plunged into the forest, arriving this time at a broad road used by the waggons which cart off the felled trees. The drive was an unusually long one, and a considerable time elapsed before the first blast of the horn announced that the guns were placed. We were perhaps about fifty yards separate, E—— being at the remote corner of the drive; and as we stood upon the side of the road opposite the long stripe of forest which we fronted, it was clear that we dared only fire at the deer as they came up through the wood, or as they disappeared, having crossed the road, into the forest behind us. Above all, we were warned not to shoot down the road. Well, in the interval which ensued between the blast of the keeper's horn and the response from Schaller—when most of us, anticipating nothing, were sitting on the bank of the wood—a loud report rang along the open line of the road. I jumped up, and was just in time to see that E—— had fired at and missed a splendid buck, which instantaneously dashed into the forest. The next moment I caught sight of something passing rapidly through the trees some hundred yards off, and saw that the buck, having completed a large semicircle, was again about to attempt a crossing of the road about midway between me and S——. Further, he was making straight for a mass of young trees which, if he did cross the road safely, would almost certainly allow him to escape. My only chance, therefore, I considered, was to get a shot at him before he arrived at the road; and just as he came bounding up to the front of the enclosure I levelled my gun, and pulled the trigger. The barrel missed fire—for the gun, which was not a breech-loader, like that which every one else carried, had been loaded two days. At the same moment the buck—and I remember catching a glimpse of his fine horns with an inward pang of regret—cleared the road in a couple of bounds and was lost in that clump of brushwood. I gave him up for lost; but the next second—for all this occurred certainly in one second—he again appeared, having left the brushwood for a fair run through the trees behind me. I fired my left barrel at him as he passed between two firs, and he disappeared. I did not see him fall, and naturally concluded that he had passed on into the dense twilight of the wood. Presently, however, I heard a long, deep groan; and I knew that that was the death-sigh of the buck, wherever he lay. Not daring to leave my post when any minute a charge of shot might come rattling round my ears, I waited out the other incidents of the drive, which were stirring enough. First, a doe came bounding past S—— who, not taking time to look, put

up his gun and fired. Fortunately he missed. Scarcely had he fired when a buck, chased by one of the beagles, came up, looked at him, and leapt lightly away to the right, running parallel to the road and thus exposing himself to the fire of every one of the guns. Bang, bang! went the young Bavarian; bang, bang! repeated the doctor; bang, bang! echoed the keeper who stood at the corner of the drive. Not a shot had touched him; for we saw him at length cross the road, half a mile off, at full speed. Another buck, as we afterwards heard, was seen by the doctor to be coming straight down upon him. In fact the path which the deer was following met the road about six yards from where the doctor stood; and the frightened animal, listening to the clatter of the beaters and caring nothing for what was in front, was about to run upon the muzzle of the doctor's gun. The worthy man elevated his weapon—an incomprehensible trick which I noticed more than one Black Forest sportsman adopt—and stood with it poised against his shoulder, waiting for the buck to come within shot. A loud rustling and plunging behind him startled him so that he had nearly dropped his breech-loader, and as he involuntarily turned round, Hector bounded past him in a state of the wildest excitement, his eyes glaring, and his mouth foaming. Now the doctor had been praising Hector all the morning. There never was such a powerful dog, such a handsome dog, a dog with such a keenness of scent, a dog of such untiring exertion. On goes Hector, and as he crosses the road he comes in sight of the buck which the doctor had in his imagination already killed. With a ferocious howl Hector flies in the animal's path, and in a moment deer and hound are alike lost to sight, the buck having turned precipitately and fled, Hector following close upon his heels. All this story I received from the doctor as we came together when the driving was over—that is to say, I gathered it piecemeal from out of a series of the most horrible guttural blasphemies that ever were uttered in any one language.

But why the sudden rosiness upon S——'s face, and why does he quickly pull off his cap to see if that bit of green larch is rightly fixed? Along the path, preceded by the boy in the red smock, come our two friends—she with the bright eyes and the pale curls, and she with the stately gait and the haughty eyebrows and the silver hair whom we call the Duchess. By this time we are standing round the buck which lay dead at a leap's length from the two trees between which I had fired at him.

"What a lovely creature!" says the younger of the new-comers, and surely that is not moisture which makes the blue eyes wear so soft a lustre? "It is a shame to kill such timid, harmless things."

"But you know," says S—— apologetically, "they do a frightful amount of damage. The people complain that the Prince does not keep the roe thinned. They have their corn eaten into in some districts in a way that is quite ruinous—"

"And so you come all the way from England to help the poor Black Foresters to gain a decent harvest," she replies, with a little smile; and S—— smiles, and they look at each other, and then she turns away

her eyes and pretends to be deeply interested in that story told by the doctor of Hector—a story of which I am sure she does not understand a word.

"Do you call this deer-shooting?" asks the Duchess, coldly. "In Scotland we have deer worth shooting deer that can afford to challenge your dogs—deer that can swim from the Cloch Lighthouse at Gourock across to Dunoon——"

"Tell the lady," says E—— to me, having understood partly what she meant, "that we had red-deer here also; but that they made such havoc that the Prince ordered them to be all destroyed. And in Bavaria we have plenty of them still, and there you can go out and hunt the wild-boar also and the wolf; and that is as good as the red-deer of Scotland."

But her grace would not admit that any sport in the world could compare with the deer-stalking of Scotland; and in the midst of this discussion we all sat down to have lunch. The sun by this time had become excessively hot; and very gladly did we all partake of those bottles of lukewarm Affenthaler which two of the beaters had brought for our repast. The guides and beaters threw themselves on the dry moss beside the slaughtered buck, and opened out their stores of bread and cheese, the dogs lying in mute expectation at their feet; and as a gleam of sunshine from the trees overhead fell athwart this picturesque little party, one could have fancied the whole scene the work of a stage-manager. If there was one rather apparent difference, it lay in the fact that walking gentlemen have not usually got splendidly bronzed and bearded faces, and that one young person there had eyes of a brightness and cheeks of a rosiness which one does not expect to find in a singing-chambermaid.

All the incidents of the previous campaign were now recalled; and again the little doctor urged his anathemas—conscious that neither of the ladies could understand him—against Hector. Hector lay stretched at full length on the brackens, panting lazily or licking the foam from his glistening black shoulders. Then came the question of breech-loader against muzzle-loader. Breech-loaders are here universally used, and are very cheap; the barrels being brought down from Liége to be fitted and finished in Carlsruhe or Freiburg. It was agreed at last that an English Joe Manton shot too well in the Black Forest; and that instead of a gun which would carry far and close, it was better to have one which would spread the shot at shorter distances. My Black Forest friends evidently liked to have a good chance when they fired; and there was no denying that a Joe Manton, with an ordinary charge of buck-shot, would at a short distance give the shooter about the same chance as if he was shooting with a rifle. Alas! that the theory was to be proved by a sad experience!

At length once more we set off. It was arranged that Blue-eyes should accompany S—— and admire his prowess, while I was to take the Duchess under my wing. I certainly preferred this arrangement; for besides the fact

that a man always fancies his wife to be in greater danger from other people's guns than from his own, there was the little circumstance that Blue-eyes wore a very conspicuous little jacket and a no less remarkable hat, which were only too likely to give the roe a distant intimation of her presence. Besides, speaking was absolutely prohibited ; and while a man labours under no imperative necessity to speak to his wife, he may be seduced into sacrificing the finest shot in the world if an answer is demanded by the lips of gentle nineteen. On this occasion we were posted on the side of a hill among tall but rather scantily planted trees. S—— and Blue-eyes were taken down into the valley, and were placed by the keeper immediately behind a large pine which had fallen and rent up the earth with its roots so that the latter formed an excellent hiding-place. No sooner was the keeper gone, than S—— seemed to forget where he was. He omitted entirely to signal to his next neighbours. In vain I whistled quietly to him ; so, at length, I took up a fir-cone and threw it at him. I regret to say that it struck Blue-eyes on the hat ; but at all events it attracted their joint attention, and let them know that we were quietly contemplating them from the side of the hill at a distance of about sixty yards. Somehow I fancied that S—— started and looked confused when he confronted our gaze ; but as Schaller's horn was then heard, I abandoned further observation.

And yet it was evident that our two young friends were engaged in an earnest conversation ; for S—— never once looked in front of him at that long line of cover, while his gun, which I presume was on half-cock, rested with its butt on the ground. I had just come to the conclusion that Blue-eyes was very like Diana Vernon at the moment when she turns to sing, " Though I leave thee now in sorrow," when—when a buck trotted peacefully out from the bushes in front of S——. He paused, looked up and down the cleared space, trotted lightly along again, and again paused. He did not perceive the two young persons stationed behind that mass of earth and roots, and stood there in the full sunlight, with his glossy coat shining brightly, and with his ears pricked up to catch the sound of the beaters. Now to kill this innocent and beautiful creature while it was standing peacefully and unsuspiciously about twenty-five yards from your ambush, is an action at which any one who sits in his own quiet room and reads this paper would shudder. But to be within shot of this beautiful creature, and to think of the appearance his horns will present in your library, and not to kill him, is simply what no mortal man ever thought of. Afterwards you may appease your conscience by the reflection that, either by you or some one else, these roe must be killed, to give the peasant-farmers a chance of living ; but at the time you are simply possessed by that demon of destruction which enters a man's soul the moment he takes a double-barrelled gun in his hand. I waited and expected every second to see S—— take up his gun. The Duchess grasped my arm, and, although it was not a Scotch deer, she trembled with anticipation.

The buck stood for yet a moment, raised his fine keen nostrils, and sniffed the air in every direction; and at last trotted away further down the hollow. The rustle of his departure caused S—— to look round—he evidently saw the deer—dropped his gun with the start which the vision gave him—and when he picked it up, the buck was gone. Then, as he had done on another occasion, he darted a glance towards me; and I wondered if he was blushing. Blue-eyes tried to look unconscious, and busied herself in plucking some scarlet stoneberries.

But we had not seen the last of the deer. A few seconds after his disappearance we were startled by the sound of loud baying in a direction where no dog should have been; and it soon became apparent that the demon Hector, ranging up and down as his fancy prompted him, had come upon a lair or met one of the roe. And this time the evil propensities of the hound were of good service, for immediately afterwards I saw the buck which S—— had allowed to escape, coming right up and over the hill. I saw, also, from time to time, the lithe black form of Hector, and knew that the buck was flying for his life. On he came—he must needs pass six yards in front of us.

"Don't shoot him," said my companion.

I fired my right barrel—he did not fall; I fired the remaining barrel, and could scarcely believe my eyes, when I saw him dash onward quite unharmed. I had not touched him; and as he came up I felt that I could have killed him with a revolver.

"At least," says the Duchess, with that cold smile of hers—"At least, Mr. S—— had the good sense not to pretend that he was able to kill the poor animal."

"Ma'am," said I, savagely, "both Mr. S—— and myself have shot one of your poor animals to-day already, though we didn't go and hide ourselves in a hole as is the fashion in your charming country."

"Oh, yes," says she quietly, "both of you have killed a buck; but wasn't it a—what do you say at billiards when you make one of your ordinary cannons? You know!"

"I know," said I, "that the man who takes his wife with him when he goes out shooting is—"

A loud whirring of wings stopped the sentence. Turning quickly, I saw a fine cock capercaille coming rapidly over the firs; instinctively I put my gun up (it being again loaded), and just as I had pulled the trigger I had the satisfaction of seeing the splendid bird come tumbling down on the green moss some thirty yards off. He was in fine plumage, and having been caught by only one or two of the shot, was not in the least mangled. The beaters now making their appearance, allowed S—— and his companion to come up; and out of pure courtesy we both refrained from speaking of the last seen buck.

"What a splendid bird!" said Blue-eyes. "Why, it is bigger than a turkey. You have none of these in Scotland, aunt?"

"But we have," says the Duchess, proudly.

"I am sure I never saw one all the time I was shooting in the Highlands," says S——; "and yesterday I saw seven in that stripe of forest beside Hubertshofen."

"Perhaps you were pre-occupied while you were shooting in the Highlands by graver cares," said the Duchess, with her cruel smile, "as you seemed to be here a few minutes ago when you allowed one of the deer to stand and look at you for several seconds."

"Haben Sie 'was gesehen, Herr?" asks one of the keepers, coming up to S——.

(He pronounced it "Hawbe Sie was gesay, Herr?")

"O yes, ja," said S——, "habe einen Bock gesehen—aber—abor—verstehen Sie?—too late—too late—nicht bald—verstehen Sie?"

The keeper went off with a terrible conundrum evidently weighing on his mind. The boys had told him that the buck came right out in front of S——, and he could not understand why it was not shot. As for the explanation tendered him by S——, my friend might as well have been talking Brezonec to the poor man. A blast of E——'s horn flew recalled us from our stations, and we found the party collected round the buck which I had so atrociously missed. The unfortunate animal had run the gauntlet of all the guns, had been shot at by the young Bavarian, wounded slightly by the Doctor, and finally fell to a well-planted shot from the shoulder of our host of Hubertshofen. E—— was not ill-pleased to see my capercailzie. The fact is that the prohibition against shooting these magnificent birds—which are rather abundant in the neighbourhood—is only implied, and is binding chiefly upon those residents of the district who constantly go out roe-shooting. Nothing can exceed the courtesy that is invariably extended to strangers when they accompany these expeditions. If you are a sufficiently bad shot and out for the first time, they will even allow you to shoot at does before doe-shooting has commenced; but this is a privilege of which few avail themselves. The unpardonable sin is to shoot a fawn; and as this is never done but by mistake, and as the shame of the deed is much feared, there are several good stories told of the terrible straits in which men have been placed in endeavouring to conceal the carcase of the poor little thing they had shot for a fox. I may add that you cannot offend your host by shooting too well; for these shooting-parties shoot for the market, and there is no danger of thinning the deer too much. You are rewarded with the horns of the bucks which you kill: the carcases being sent off to the large towns.

It was agreed that the next drive should be the last, as the day was wearing on, and we were some distance from home. I fancied I saw a look of determination on E——'s face; was he resolved to give his companion some convincing proof of his skill? Unfortunately the drive was a blank; two bucks roused from their lair having doubled back upon the beaters and escaped. This is a trick which an old buck, when he has been shot at a few times and missed, soon learns. I heard afterwards that S——, determined on killing something, had levelled his gun at some

object which he vaguely saw running through the brushwood, and was only prevented from being the death of Hector by Blue-eyes uttering a little cry of alarm and grasping his elbow.

Then the whole party walked back along the winding road to Hubertshofen, the boy in front carrying two of the three bucks that had been killed, and occasionally chanting a verse of some popular Black Forest song. But it was not until the evening that the keepers became vocal, when they met in the public room of the Hubertshofen Inn to smoke their long pipes and drink chopins of white wine. Schaller the ancient was at the head of the table, his great black moustache glistening with the wine, his head surrounded by a pale aurora of smoke, and his great killing-knife lying beside him on the table, ready for the slicing of brown bread. The yellow light of the candles was just sufficient to show the ruddy-brown faces of his companions against the vague shadows of the great chamber; and then, with a clattering of glasses, with a strong, deep, impressive chorus, which must have rung through the darkness without, they began to sing—

Im Wald und auf der Halde,
Da such' ich meine Freude,
Ich bin ein Jäger's Mann,
Ich bin ein Jäger's Mann,
Den Wald und Forst zu hégen,
Das Wildpret zu erlegen,
Das ist's was mir gefällt,
Das ist's was mir gefällt.

Halli, hallo, halli, hallo, das ist's was mir gefällt,
Halli, hallo, halli, hallo, das ist's was mir gefällt.

"I do not love you."

CHAPTER I.



SHE was leaning in the window of that cold, comfortless room: she would lean there, though he had tried to draw her away. She was a slight, frail-looking creature; her form and her attitude suggested pliability, and told of long-settled despondency. Twining a scarlet thread round and round her finger, she gazed out with unflinching persistence. There was nothing to see: the dismal evening was falling upon the wet street of a dull country-town after a raw drizzling autumn day.

He stood half behind, half beside her,—just enough withdrawn to be hidden from passers-by,—and watched the pale drooping profile and the restless fingers.

His face—that of a man no longer young—was proud, passionate, and resolute; so were his words, and the impatient movements by which he now and then changed his posture were evident kickings against and revoltings at the pricks which lay between him and the accomplishment of his will. He looked a man unused to be resisted, and whom nothing could so much chafe as the mere fact of defeat, let the object of the struggle have been what it might.

"Give some sign that you, at least, hear me," he said. As he spoke he possessed himself of an end of that scarlet thread, and twitched it from her hold, thinking by this to rouse her. Thus sharply withdrawn, it cut through the delicate skin; but neither of them noticed it. The movements of the small hands continued to be much the same as before its withdrawal.

After a pause—during which he watched her with an expression of exasperation growing over his face—he put his hands on her shoulders, turning her towards him, drawing her from the window by a more decided ejection than he had used before.



A. Kres

"Have you heard anything I have said?" he asked, as she lifted her mournful eyes to his with a pleading look, while her wan face told of utter weariness, of heart-ache, of despair.

"Yes, all. I have heard all."

"You have nothing to say? No answer to make?"

"Only the same words to say, the old answer to make; the words you have heard so often—the words I hardly dare say to you again—the words that are so true, so dreadfully true, though I have prayed daily—only God knows how fervently—for your sake to be this to believe them false. I do not love you—I do not love you—I do not love you."

"Why echo the hateful sound?" he cried, clutching her clay-cold hands—which she was wringing as if in an agony of impotence—in one of his. "To hear those words once is punishment enough for a life of sin, and against you at least I have not sinned. Why echo them? Have I not heard them often enough already to make them ring through my life, sleeping and waking?"

"Give me no cause to speak them again. Be merciful! Leave my soul free. If you asked me for anything I could give you, were it my life——"

"It is just for that, for your life, that I do ask you."

"But you want it in a way I cannot, cannot give it! I have no life to give in that way."

"Mere sophistry. You can give me all I ask for: give me yourself. Life must be very precious to you still since you love it so dearly that you will not trust it to my keeping."

"I cannot. You want my life, you say, therefore you want my life self—you want my heart, my soul; and I could only give you what is dead; a dead heart, or just an empty shell—no heart, no soul at all; for," she whispered the last words, "you know that I do not love you, you know even more than that."

"Leave me to judge of what I want," he answered. "Yield your will to mine, with what comes after—let come what may—I will never reproach you. Marry me, give me the right to care for you, never speak those hateful words again. I ask no more from you than this—this you can do."

"You cannot bear to hear those words just simply spoken now and then by a being you can leave when you weary of her presence. How will you bear to feel them, see them, in all ways, be made conscious of their truth daily, hourly, on and on, for all the time we are both compelled to stay on earth? How will you bear to have my daily life, day by day, telling you, 'I do not love you?'"

His grasp of her clasped hands tightened till pain sent a shudder through over her face. It passed away quickly, and she gave no other sign. She knew why he fibbed as she finished speaking. She did not know why he had fibbed so strangely before he fibbed. She had lost "will" when she should have still "would," and he had still given this slight fibbing.

tion. In spite of that frown he now spoke gently, and with an extreme tenderness softening all his face, saying,—“ I hardly recognize my tender-hearted little friend to-day ; she seems causelessly and wilfully cruel. But I answer your cruel questions thus, Lily,—I shall not have to bear such torture as you suggest. You *shall* love me. I feel that the power, might, and heat of my love will absolutely conquer and subdue you. You turn whiter, and you shudder ; but I say it shall be so.”

A faint smile, half pitying, half incredulous, flickered over her face.

“ And I say,” she answered, “ that my heart is gone out of me, is beyond your power, as it is beyond mine ; that there is an obstinate spirit in me, beyond your power, and beyond mine ; that, if I hated you, I could do nothing to you more cruel than consent to your will ; that you had better dig up a corpse from the graveyard, and take that to your heart, than make a woman your wife who knows surely and irresistibly, as I do, that she does not, cannot love you.”

She spoke vehemently, and as if from a sort of inspiration ; but then she sickened, and the strength left her limbs. She was not, in any way, equal to a struggle of will with him. It was only his grasp of her hands that now kept her from sinking in a heap at his feet. He gathered her into his arms, saying,—“ You, dead or living, and no other, will I have here ;” he pressed the white blank face, with its closed eyes, into his breast.

Just then the room-door opened. A woman’s face looked in for a moment, then was withdrawn, and the door was closed again stealthily as it had been opened.

Mr. Elphinstone heard nothing, but he saw this in the cracked mirror surmounting the empty fire-place, opposite which it chanced that he was now standing.

Seeing it he smiled to himself, as if not ill-pleased, and muttered, “ One reason more, had I needed it.”

He looked round the bare-boarded room—a school-room of the most rigid and comfortless description—for some resting-place more welcome than his arms to his helpless burden. Just then she gathered a little strength, drew herself away from him, and leaning against the table—

“ Leave me now—for pity’s sake leave me now,” she pleaded.

In that word “ now ” he read a second sign that she was yielding.

There was no creature in that dismal house to whose kindness he could command her. It was hard to leave her alone, so ill and ill at ease ; but she reiterated her entreaty, and he went. As he looked back at her, before closing the door, he was struck more vividly than ever by the chill and squalor of the place ; he set his teeth, and muttered,—

“ This is not to be endured, and shall not last much longer. I have given way, and been patient long enough.”

His carriage was waiting for him, not at the door, but at the end of the street. He flung himself into it, and gave the word “ home ; ” then, sitting with his eyes fixed on the place beside him which was hers already in his imagination—thinking of his wealth and luxury, of her poverty

and comfortlessness—contrasting the place in which he had left her and the home he could give her, he set his will firmer and firmer towards winning her.

He knew that to what she had long borne would now be added insult and contumely, probably dismissal and disgrace, and that for her these would be a sentence of starvation. He did not reproach himself—he had taken all reasonable precautions. They had been surprised, her retreat was cut off; it was not his fault, he could not be sorry that circumstances conspired to further his will.

His will! Had he not set his will at least as much as his heart on conquering the resistance of a weak woman? and in setting that will above her pure woman's instinct, did he not tacitly show that he valued his love above the Omnipotent Love to the shelter of which he would not trust her? rather than that, drawing her from it, into what was—for her, because she felt it to be so—sin.

CHAPTER II.

WHEN she had been some time alone, and the life that had ebbed very low in her had slowly flowed back, Lily Winters set herself to think and decide. This was foolish and dangerous; while she trusted to instinct and feeling she was comparatively safe; reason and reflection were less reliable guides. Is this unsound doctrine? I will not preach it then as a gospel of general application, only say that as for Lily Winters so for many women—let moral teachers and philosophers say what they will—feeling is a safer guide than reflection, instinct than reason.

She seated herself on one of the forms, leaning both elbows on the desk in front, buried her hands in her clustering hair, pushing it back from her brow, and set herself to think. She had two hours before her—the last two hours of a week's holiday during which the little girls, her pupils, had been absent on a visit.

When one hour, perhaps, of those two had expired—she was not conscious that more than a few moments had passed—Lily rose, standing upon a wooden stool, for she was but a little woman, and the mirror was hung high, she looked at herself in the clouded glass. It gave no flattering reflection. Look over her shoulder, and see a small face of rather dingy pallor, the lower part of it expressing just now a sort of struggle between spiritual firmness and tenacity and intellectual and physical weakness of will. The upper part of it, with its large gentle eyes that look as if they had wept away their brightness, and learned to fear always, is fine in a curious half-elfish, and yet tenderly human way. The figure looks older than the face—Lily stooped, and often seemed to be shrinking away from the world—but it is not ungraceful; has even, through its suggestion of timid helplessness, its own peculiar charm: it is perverted now, rather than represented by an ill-made, ill-fitting, and very shabby dress.

"You were rather pretty once," said Lily to her own face. "But

now—— why can't he just leave me alone to fade ? I look blighted, that is what I look. I shall soon drop off my stalk. It is because I am meant for this, and not for life, that I cannot forget—cannot forget."

Those last words she repeated many times : after she had turned from the glass and sat down again she repeated them, wringing her tiny hands as she uttered them. How hard she tried to pass her whole life in review—to think it all over ; but there were places in which her mind hung as in a choked-up groove. She was not much past thirty, but she had lived her life, as far as love, hope, and joy made part of it. She had loved, and she had hoped with all her power. She had learned to say "*had hoped*," but could not learn to say "*had loved*;" her power of loving and living would leave her together. She had known sharp changes of fortune, but of this she neither felt nor thought. She cared nothing for luxury or even comfort. It seemed as if her heart had suffered so much that for the little frail body there was no measure nor means of suffering left.

She had been a petted only child, and an heiress ; now she was an orphan—absolutely poor, and absolutely friendless, save for that man who had just left her—a man who had always loved her as child, girl, woman, as she had loved another—a man to whom her parents had owed salvation from ruin, and the peace and ease of their last days ; a man, however, from whom she could take nothing, unless she took everything. If she did this, what could she give him in return ! Nothing, she said : everything, he declared. He had shown by his life that he could not learn to forget her, to have an existence in which she had no part. The love which, unknown to her, had strengthened in him slowly, year by year, had mastered him now. He knew all the story of her love—or almost all—and it made no difference. She had begun to feel lately that there was no escape for her ; that she was in the power of his inflexible will ; that all of her that was tangible he would grasp and hold. She had thought of flight, but the thing was, there was no escape from consciousness of his suffering, and of the heavy, heavy debt of gratitude she owed. "Life does not leave me as quickly as I believed it would," she thought. "It cannot keep in me long—but yet some years, perhaps. I am not more weak and ailing now than I was last autumn. Are there any in the world so miserable that they have no power to give some happiness to another ? Is it for this that life lingers in me, that I should try and do some good to him ? I have lived my life for myself ; but is there any life in me that I could live for him ? I do not love him ; but could I serve him as if I did ? He is alone, as I am ; more alone than I am. There is the danger. Am I enough alone to make him feel less alone ? He starves in his luxury, he says ; he says that he wears his soul out with craving, so that his life is useless, and he might as well not have been born. This is not true : I hear of noble actions that he does ; but the misery is that he feels it true. He never loses the consciousness, he tells me, that his heart, as he says I am, is outside in cold and desolation. If

I let him take me in, to live under his roof, in his sight, will this bring him any of the ease, and rest, and happiness he thinks? I do not know—not this or anything."

Poor Lily! She grew more and more perplexed—losing sight of the fixed immutable truth that she had recognized as truth when she only felt.

A little flicker of feverish warmth came into the ash-pale cheeks as she contemplated the sacrifice of herself, and dreamed of the possibility of making one who suffered, with that suffering of the heart which alone she was inclined to own as suffering, less unhappy.

"Be quiet," she whispered. "This is mere selfishness." That was when she was again conscious of the inner voice pleading—"But I do not love him—I do not love him."

It had long been dark out-doors, but the room was not dark; the light of the street-lamp outside fell across the floor. Lily's two hours had more than flown when the door opened, and a woman, large, handsome, and handsomely dressed, entered, a candle in her hand. She swept up to Lily, so close that it seemed as if she meant to sweep over her, and set her candle down upon the table. Lily had risen, startled by the sudden entrance, dazzled by the sudden light; she was not reassured by the expression of that handsome face, swollen and inflamed by anger.

"I beg your pardon for not being downstairs to receive the young ladies," she began. "I did not know it was so late. I will go directly and put them to bed."

"Stop!" her mistress commanded. "No wonder you 'did not know it was so late,' so well employed as you have been! But I did not come to speak to you about those neglects of duty to which I am so accustomed from you" (that was quite untrue, Lily was scrupulous and conscientious), "but to ask you a question. Are you engaged to Mr. Elphinstone, Miss Winters?"

"Madam!"

"I intend to have an answer. Are you engaged to Mr. Elphinstone, Miss Winters?"

Lily's large, mournful eyes met the furious look fixed on them with gentle wonder.

"I am not," she answered: her soft sweet voice contrasted strongly with the harsh hoarse tones of the question.

"I thought it not possible, yet anything else seemed as unlikely." Mrs. Maston glanced with insolent contempt at the little faded creature in the shabby dress, and shook out her own ample, rustling skirts. "Yet I have heard what I am forced to believe, and what obliges me to request that you leave this house immediately—to-night—within an hour! I will permit no further intercourse between you and my little girls—do not dare attempt to see them again."

Lily, perceiving that her mistress was waiting to hear if she had anything to say, choked down some strong emotion, and murmured,—

"Let me kiss Effie again, only let me kiss little Effie once more."

She was a poor-spirited creature, you see. Her request was denied, and Mrs. Maston swept out. The handsome widow was almost mad with jealousy. She had played so hard, and she thought so skilfully, to win Mr. Elphinstone. She had taken Lily (whom she disliked from the time she first saw her) into her house to please him, and had never dreamt of finding a rival in "that mean-looking little creature." Something had lately aroused her suspicion, she had set one of her maids to watch, and now she knew of Mr. Elphinstone's visits to the governess, and that this evening he had been seen holding her in his arms.

Lily stood where she had been left. It was dark and late. "Where shall I go?" she asked herself. She was timid: the fact that it was dark and late moved her to a quickened sense of misery and desolation. For its being cold and wet—she heard the rain driven against the window furiously—she did not care. Within the prescribed time Lily left the place: she had remembered one possible refuge—with an old servant whose house she thought she could find—if not, where could she go? She had no money.

CHAPTER III.

It was in Sarah Green's small kitchen that Mr. Elphinstone found Lily next day. She was straining her eyes to catch the last light from the dim window, and hurting her weak hands with coarse needle-work. She had looked almost happy; feeling all day as if she breathed more freely, as if the fresher air from a new life opening before her were blown upon her bracingly. But her face changed when she heard his knock; she gave a shuddering sigh. Having admitted Mr. Elphinstone, and set a chair for him, her companion went out, leaving them together.

The shock of the evening before had roused some courage in Lily. Night had brought her counsel. Having prayed to be delivered from temptation, the way had seemed to grow clear before her. She would go away with Sarah Green—Mr. Elphinstone should not know where—oh, it pained her to pain him! but, with her cleared vision, she had seen that this was the shortest and most durable pain she could give him—from a distance she would write to him in a way that even he should feel to be final. In the night, after she had prayed, it had been so visible to her that his will was not the will of God for either of them.

And now—she dropped her work and clasped her hands, and set her lips resolutely. If she should have to yield she would struggle first; but, admitting by that "if" the possibility of this yielding, was she not already lost? When he came in she had glanced up at him, but neither of them had spoken; he had read something of her purpose in her face and in her occupation. Now he sat and looked into the fire till Lily felt afraid of the silence and of his face.

"You heard I had left my place," she said. "I meant to have written to you to say good-by, and to try to thank you for——." She faltered.

.How could she ever thank him? What was it she had to thank him for? So much, everything. And how was she going to pay him?

"Where are you going?" he asked, turning upon her almost savagely.

"I hardly know yet. I have not quite arranged my plans." She tried to seem unmoved, but she felt her soul flinch from the expression of his face as he asked—"Is there no pity in your heart, Lily?"

Nevertheless she spoke bravely, and according to the truth, of which she still kept some hold.

"Oh, yes, so much—if you only knew; so much, that I will save you from yourself, from the life-long torture you propose for yourself. It is not only that" (she lowered her voice as she came to these words) "I do not love you; but I cannot, cannot, cannot" (the words wrung out) "forget. I go on loving; he is somewhere. Sometimes I almost believe, in spite of my knowledge that it is not possible, that he is on earth still: but if not on earth he is in heaven. Love reaches heaven. Life here is only a little piece out of something that was before, and will be after. I go on loving. I love him, I love him, and I do not, cannot love you."

Mr. Elphinstone sprang up. He said nothing, but he moved about the place, grating the sanded floor under his feet. Was he moved, or shaken? Lily watched him with clasped hands, parted lip, quivering nostrils. Did he feel that her last appeal was made? Would he yield? If not, what was the will of a woman against that of such a man? Presently he stood still before her. He had been shaken, but he would not yield.

"I thank you, Lily, for being wise for me," he began, and what the peculiar inflection of his voice meant she could not tell. "But I know myself better than a girl like you can know me. Life, and the world too, I know a little more really than you can do. Were there the faintest shadow of the possibility of the truth of what you suggested just now, I would leave you to wait your life out, and never urge you to do anything but wait. You believe this?"

"Yes, oh, yes!"

"But you know there is not that faintest shadow."

"Not as far as man can judge, but with God, you know, all things are possible."

"We have to do with human possibility; we are agreed there is none. Now I will tell you what your seamstress scheme means: for you, slow, sure starvation and shameful danger; for me, a most exquisitely ingenuous torture. You see and feel that I am calm and dispassionate now: I have weighed everything judicially. It is impossible that I should give you up. We are both miserable through some great mistake in life. I know that you can mitigate life for me (I plead in this way, Lily, as the only way to reach your heart), and I believe that in doing this your own misery will find its greatest possible, only possible alleviation. In lying for my

happiness you will most nearly approach your own. You are a woman, Lily, and not a very hard one. I am a man and love you with a strong man's power. I shall prevail—you shall love me! We shall yet be happy. Good heavens! for all men there is some happiness somewhere in their lives, surely. What have I known of this yet? After what I have suffered—living with my heart hung out as a mark for the blows and scorns of the world, and not able to move a finger for its protection—will it not be happiness to hold it as a jewel enclosed?—to know you, feel you, see you, hear you under the shelter of my roof? Rest will enter my heart when you enter my doors—if you live there and hate me, I shall have more peace than if you were indifferent to me anywhere else in the world. But you will not hate me."

He looked down upon her, his face aglow with resolute heat. She, a pale, scared thing, looked up at him, powerless. Her will yielded, but not her heart. Her reason yielded, but not her heart; but the poor thing, her heart, was borne down, laid low, and felt the waves break over it.

"I will try and make you happy," she said, after a long silence; "I will live to serve you." Then one last cry was audibly cried by her soul. "Oh, Ralph, have you *prayed*?" It seems to me that you are tempting me to sin—dragging us both down to an unknown depth of misery."

He smiled, laid his hand on her head soothingly, then gently pressed it over her strained eyes, which looked, in their intensity, as if the vexed soul might fly forth through them.

"Where can be your sin, my pure Lily! You sacrifice yourself to me. In the truest sense, you lay down your life for your friend—I am your friend, you know; you have always granted me that title. For the misery—we will prove it."

CHAPTER IV.

On a June day in the following year, little Mrs. Elphinstone was sunning herself on the terrace outside the window of her sitting-room. Her hand was full of roses, below her was her rose-garden, beyond that the sunny slopes of the park stretched away to the beech-woods, shining in early summer sun-steeped green.

A very fair scene, and she looked a fair little woman; her bright clustering hair glistened in the sunshine; her cheeks were rounder than they used to be, and had a tinge of colour, and her morning dress was graceful and pretty. There was certainly just then more appearance of physical well-being about Mrs. Elphinstone than there had been for long years about Lily Winters; but for the rest—

What did her husband think? Unknown to her, he was watching her now. He called her; she started at his voice, and came towards him hurriedly.

"You want me?"

"It is nothing important; there is no reason you should look frightened." He stood in the window blocking it up so that she could not immediately go in. He put his hand on her head as she stood in the sunshine, and bending it back, perused her face.

"What is it?" she asked.

"I am trying to discover—I have been trying great part of the morning. Lily, I wish you would cure yourself of some things—"

"Tell me what things, Ralph." She stooped forward to put her roses inside the room and to withdraw her head from the pressure of his hand.

"Amongst others of starting when I call you, and of that strange trick you have of widening your eyes and lifting your brows when I speak to you, in a way that makes you look like some poor wild creature that has been caught and caged, but never tamed. These things are very painful to me—that expression especially."

"It is very painful to me to be so watched! I wish, Ralph, you would not do it; you make me so nervous that I am almost afraid to move, and then I do all the more the things I try not to do. You cannot think how hard I try to please you." She had spoken pettishly—a thing she did very seldom,—now she paused, looked up into his face, then covered her own, and burst into tears. He had rarely known her to do this—in general her misery was dry eyes.

Some long untouched chords of her being had been made to vibrate that morning. As she looked upon the early summer beauty of the world, a feeling had come over her that life was worth having while there could be moments in which the outward beauty of the universe made unmatted music in the soul. This feeling had come over her while she was spell-bound—held by a sort of dream, during which she lived back in that time when want and loss and emptiness had made up her existence, and her misery had been negative. Her husband's voice sounded a sudden awakening, and sent a jarring vibration through her. Less on her guard, less under her own control than usual, feeling the chains that bound her more, because for a time she had forgotten them, she burst into tears, and cried,—"Oh, I am miserable! for I know now that I was right—that I make you more and more miserable."

"Hush!" he whispered, and he drew her hands away from her face, and drew her into the room. "No tears now; I came to tell you of a visitor, before whom, if you see her at all, you must make a show of happiness. Mrs. Maston is here. Acting with her usual assurance, she has dared come to see you. Do you choose to receive her? One of the children is with her. Why, one would think you had loved the woman to see your face now!"

"Not her, but Little Effie. Is it Little Effie who is with her? I did love Little Effie, and she loved me."

"I think it is Effie who is with her. You will find them in the drawing-room."

Lily was hurrying from the room, when, looking in the mirror to see that her face told no tale of tears, she caught the expression of Mr. Elphinstone's. Her aspect changed directly. She calmed herself, went and stood before him, demure and quiet. For a moment there had shone from her face something of the girlish radiance he remembered to have seen upon it long, long years ago : now, as she stood before him, she was wholly Mrs. Elphinstone, restrained and cautious, studiously considerate of his will.

" You would rather I did not see Mrs. Maston," she said. " Effie is nothing to me if you do not wish me to see her."

" Nothing is anything to you, I know," he answered, bitterly. " I know that you are all duty and submission ; but I am not quite such a tyrant as you make me out. I do not want your life to be nothing but a series of small sacrifices supplementing the great one." He tried to speak lightly after the first outburst. " Come, we will go together," he said, smiled, and drew her hand through his arm.

Lily was not deceived. She had no pleasure in the wild caresses of the child, who bounded towards her when she opened the door, and, in spite of all her mother's previous schooling, hung upon her neck. Her husband was not watching them, he studiously avoided doing so ; he was talking graciously to the handsome widow ; but she knew, by past experience, that he heard and saw and felt all she did and said ; and this knowledge made her kiss the pretty child stealthily, as if to do so were a crime. But Effie was not to be repulsed or kept in check. When Mrs. Elphinstone was seated she sprang upon her lap, and, to her mother's admonition not to be so troublesome, answered,—

" This is not being troublesome ; Miss Winters used to like to have me here. She loved me and nobody else in the world. She told me so one day—one day when I was naughty, and she was trying to make me good." Effie was old enough, and enough spoiled by hearing too much of her worldly mother's conversation with like-minded friends, to have a dash of mischievous wickedness mingling with her childish simplicity ; and now she pushed her face close up to Lily's, and whispered,—

" Why did you leave me, and go to him, when you loved me and didn't love him ? " with a nod towards Mr. Elphinstone. " Was it because this is so much nicer than our school-room ? "

" No, no, child—no. You must not say such things. You are talking of what you cannot understand."

As Lily answered thus, her heart beat with great bounds against the clinging child, and her arm tightened round her convulsively. She looked at her husband, dreading to see signs that he had heard. Then she joined in the conversation about places in Italy and the south of France, where she and Mr. Elphinstone had wintered.

Mrs. Maston had not thought that it would prove pleasant or convenient to be on hostile terms with the Elphinstones ; so, before Lily returned, she addressed to her a long letter of explanation, congratulation,

and self-justification. Bringing Effie with her to-day had been her final attempt to secure for herself a good reception.

"What was the matter with you, Lily?" her husband asked, when Mrs. Maston and Effie had left. "I am not obliged to you if you think me such a jealous fool that I cannot bear to see you fondle a child; but you behaved as if you did think so."

Lily's eyes wandered about the room, with the restless imploring look of one seeking help, and finding none. Was she seeking a way out of the labyrinth of misery? Then she came and stood before her husband, in that shrinking, helpless attitude, to see which especially pained and annoyed him.

"I do not know what to do, where to turn for advice," she said. "You are my husband, can you be my friend, too? What are we to do? Things grow worse, and I am afraid—afraid of what lies before us. I study to serve you, to satisfy you. I have not a thought, which has anything to do with this present world, that is not yours. Yet I know, I see, I feel, that I pain you, wound you, torture you. Ralph, what shall we do? It is so miserable. What shall we do? What shall I do?"

He bent his face down to hers, and said,—

"What you must do is soon told. You talk of duty, and omit the one thing needful. You talk of submission, and keep an obstinate heart. What you must do is soon told—love me!"

She lifted her eyes to his. The truth flew forth from them against him. It was no new truth to him, yet it bruised him afresh, and made him recoil. As if the eyes had not spoken plainly enough, her lips parted, and the words, "I do not love you—I do not love you; I cannot—cannot—cannot love you," rushed from between them.

When they were spoken she caught in her breath, as if trying to recapture the escaped sounds, and wrung her hands, and cried—"It was not I. It was some demon in me spoke. Forgive me, Ralph—oh, Ralph, forgive me."

She ran from the room, down the garden, and through the park, and into the copse, near the wood; there she sank down in the ferns, and lay hidden. He followed her and found her; and, by-and-by, as the first dinner-bell rang, the servants saw their master and mistress saunter up the garden arm-in-arm. He had been in an agony lest, by one of the gardeners or any one about the place, his wife's wild flight had been observed; but it happened to be the workmen's dinner-hour, and the grounds were deserted. Perhaps one of the most stinging of the perpetual irritations which made things worse and worse for both of them as time went on, was that caused by the ceaseless effort to keep up appearances. Mr. Elphinstone was a proud man; he would not have his misery suspected could it have been lessened by half through being known; and Lily after that day was aware of this. After that day she literally strained and warped her candid nature—accepting it as part of her "duty" to act what she did not feel; trying, each day, to act well through that day the

lie of her life—to act the part of a wife who loved her husband. Of course there were times when nature reacted from this great strain : in future, she tried at such times to shut herself up away from everybody—most of all, away from her husband, lest she should be impelled to tell him not only that she did not love, but that she hated him—which she did not (it was not in her nature to hate), save when she was almost mad that she could not love him ; but that she should soon do so was one of the dreads of her life.

After the outbreak of that June day everything went on as before ; no new truth had been heard or told. Perhaps, for a time, things were a little better than before. Lily, torn by remorse and full of self-reproach, redoubled her efforts at self-control—her efforts by no word or deed, or look, to pain him.

CHAPTER V.

THE second winter of their married life Mr. and Mrs. Elphinstone did not go abroad. In the following spring, very early, it was before the snow-drops were out of bloom, for the grave was for many days strown with them, there was a small new mound in the churchyard—the pretty quiet churchyard, one gate of which opened from the park.

Poor Lily's life seemed to be a deepening pool of darkening anguish. In her husband's presence she gasped back all the tears that should have lost their bitterness of bitterness being shed upon his breast, and which, repressed, settled round her heart, to grow stagnant and poisonous.

He had not rejoiced with her in her half-delirious brief joy, and had not grieved with her in her grief, she thought. Shuddering and sighing, she said to herself—"I shall hate him by-and-by. I am going down that road, and I do not know how to stop."

Why could not Lily learn to love her husband ? He was a man most men admired ; a man more than one woman had loved for himself ; not as Mrs. Maston had done, for his position. Why could not Lily learn to love him ? Do you think she did not ask herself that question with self-torturing persistence—trying to wring the reason out of her soul ? Do you think she did not set her poor little will, all of herself she had power over, towards her "duty ?" Poor soul ! striving to learn love through duty, instead of knowing duty through love ! Life's alphabet may not, I think, be learned backward in that fashion. At least Lily could not so learn it, and she had no theories to stand in her way ; she tried simply and sincerely.

In Lily Winters, though she had not recognized this formerly, the spring of inner delight had never quite dried up ; through the dreariest and saddest years of her life, "time to remember" had been the history and poetry of dull days. This "remembering" meant for her no vague and pale representation, but a vivid re-forgetting and living again of some scenes

of her early and brief happiness. For Lily Alphinstone such "remorse-bearing" was agony, because she believed it to be sin.

Ah! Lily was far more miserable than formerly. All she suffered she suffered doubly now; for herself and for her husband. The misery of her misery, without which she thought all would be as nothing, was the consciousness of how she was a daily torture, than which nothing could be more exquisite to him. Whether or no there was morbid exaggeration of the truth in this consciousness, there it was; and over the dreary life she had lived in poverty and desolation, there seemed to her, when she now looked back upon it, to hover an atmosphere of peace and holiness.

Are there any to whom the daily companionship, the forced nearness of an inharmonious nature, an unloved being, will, at length, induce harmony—create love? If so, let them tell how Lily might have learned to love her husband. And what was the truth regarding him? Was it only in the mirror of Lily's mind that his misery was to be read? Was he learning to be content with the lot he had chosen, with a wife who did not love him?

As yet it seemed as if the knowledge that the reality of the thing he craved was not his, made him the more greedy of the semblance. He had become morose, jealous, exacting—hardly suffering her out of his sight. He was doubly thwarted. Not only his heart was wounded, but his will was resisted; and to have his will resisted by a creature so frail-seeming that sometimes he felt as if a breath of his might blow out its life—by a creature so near that in no way could he disentangle it from his heart-strings—to be mocked, as he called it, by the shadow of what he asked for—to have duty, submission, obedience freely given, and only love denied—to ask for bread and be given a stone—from all this, which he felt to be intolerable, he yet found no escape.

Lily's eyes—the eyes he watched so ceaselessly—were learning to have but two expressions for him. The one defied him, saying no more "I do not," but "I will not love you." The other was such a look as you may see in the eyes of a gentle, intelligent and high-bred dog, suddenly subjected to a course of unwonted and unmerited harsh usage—an exquisitely painful look to see even in the eyes of a dog.

Not that Lily's husband ever lifted his hand against her. Good heavens, no! But had not his eyes and his tongue scourged her, lacerated her, cowed her?

After the great trial of the birth and loss of her baby, Lily never got up her strength. After that she never had the slightest look of even physical well-being. The mind told upon the body, the body upon the mind—a constant and fatal reaction.

All the summer she was ailing: when the autumn came, the doctor advised that she should winter in the South. Then Lily showed an obstinacy of self-will that perplexed her husband. She would not go. It was the first deviation from outward wifely duty and submission, and it

amazed him. He had to yield. He brooded over this till the real reason suggested itself to him. Lily clung to the neighbourhood of her buried darling. He watched her, and found there was no evening, rain, or snow, or hail, dusk or dark, on which she did not go to bid her baby good-night. Generally, she sat awhile, quiet and tearless, by the little mound, her mind evidently not resting in or on that grave, but following her "little one" to the place her religion and her imagination combined gave it, among God's "little ones." Now and then, however, she would be mastered by a heart-bursting passion of anguish, and would throw herself upon the mound, her breast pressed against the turf, her arms beating the ground on either side, crying, with half-stifled cries—"Oh, baby, make room for me ; make room for me. Let me get through to you—let me get through." Having once stood by, unseen and unsuspected, when it was thus with her, her husband had felt that to do so again, to live through such another half-hour, was as much as his reason was worth.

And Lily thought he did not suffer with her!—that he had not rejoiced with her or grieved with her; and when forced to name the child at all, she would jealously call it not "ours," but "mine!"

Poor Lily! this present misery of hers, which she felt to be self-incurred—for had she not done evil that good might come?—was teaching her to be ungentle and unjust.

CHAPTER VI.

ONE night,—it was early spring again, but the weather was bleak and bitter, a black March,—Lily came back from the churchyard whiter than ever, and quivering in every nerve; while in her eyes was a wild visionary look. She did everything in the usual order, however, stealing upstairs with her usual quietness to put her hood and cloak away. Then going into the drawing-room, she rang for the urn, made the tea, and sat waiting for her husband, whom when she went out she had left in the dining-room, sitting over his wine—sitting with the wine before him, rather; it was little he ever drank.

Lily was one of those women who can pay a sort of mechanical attention to the smallest things when the greatest ones occupy them. Sometimes her husband taunted her with the care she took of his physical comforts, while she starved and tormented his soul. Finding that Mr. Elphinstone did not join her, and fearing the tea would be cold, she went to look for him.

She found him in her own morning room, seated at her writing-table, a manuscript book open before him. There was nothing strange in his being there; he often chose to write his letters at her desk.

"Nothing in that is new," she said, hurriedly, going up to him, when she saw what it was that occupied him. "I found it accidentally to-day. Indeed, I did not know that I had kept it. There is nothing written there

that is so much of the truth as you knew. Why should you pain yourself needlessly?" She put her hand on the book to take it from him, but he pushed her hand away.

"When you found it, why did you not directly burn it?" he asked, sternly. "Let me remind you of its contents; then you shall judge if it should be in Mrs. Elphinstone's possession."

"Spare me," Lily said, putting her hands to her head. "To-night, of all nights, spare me! To-night, of all nights, I cannot bear to be reminded of what those poor lines stood for!"

He thrust the book into his breast-pocket, but without having looked at his wife, or he must have been struck by the expression of her face. Putting his hand upon her shoulder, he said, affecting to yawn, as he spoke,—"Come and give me my tea. I am tired, and you are shaking—with cold, is it? Come!"

She took his arm as she was expected to do.

He felt her feebleness in the way she clung to him; suddenly he stopped, and turned her to the light. There was a strange concentration of intense and conflicting feeling in his face and tone, as he said,—

"Poor bird! There are no prison-bars will hold you in and back much longer, I fancy."

All that evening Lily continued to shiver and tremble perceptibly; often she furtively glanced round the room—once, at some slight, unexpected noise, she started up and screamed.

She answered to her husband's questions—"I have no control at all over myself to-night; I feel as if I had escaped from my own hold. Perhaps I shall be better in the morning, if I can sleep. But there is something I must tell you now, to-night." She paused, and gasped.

"I am listening to you, Lily," he said, in such a tone of tender pity as she had not heard from him for very long.

"Do not speak like that—speak harshly, as you have often done of late." She used a sharp intonation of entreaty. "No wonder—the wonder is how you have been so good to me. Oh, Ralph, if I could spare you this! If I had been a stronger woman, I might have spared you so much. But I cannot keep this in: if I try, my heart or my brain will burst to let it through."

"Do not try—speak, poor child, tell me this new trouble, then go to rest." He could now have found it in his heart to pray that her rest might not again, in this world, be broken.

"After all," Lily resumed, "I do not see that it makes any difference. It is better you should know, and better you should know from me; but I do not see that it makes any difference. *He is not dead!*" She sank her voice to a whisper. "I have seen him to-night. Do not look like that! Why should you mind? It makes no difference—not even to him. If he had been dead he would have known all the same. To you it can make no difference—all you ever had of me you will have still while I am alive. You knew quite well that I did not love you, and that,

I went on loving him—so you see it makes no difference ; but it was my duty to tell you—was it not ? I try to do my duty, Ralph, indeed I do ; I often fail miserably, especially since—since my baby died ; but I have tried, and I will try. Of course I was shocked and startled, and could not, at first, so plainly see that it made no difference—but I shall be better in the morning."

Was it truth, or the fancy of a sick brain ? What could it matter to the miserable man ? But he tried to discover : it seemed to him that it mattered much.

" You have seen him to-night, you say, Lily—is that all ? Did he speak ? Did you speak ? "

" No. I was in the churchyard, sitting by baby's grave. I always go to bid her good-night. You did not know it, but I always do. I tried for you not to know it—for fear——"

" For fear of what ? "

" That you should forbid me, and I should be driven to the wickedness of disobeying you. "

" You were sitting by our baby's grave—go on."

" I was sitting by my baby's grave when he passed outside in the lane. I felt him before I saw him. As he passed he looked over the wall, and I saw his face through the branches of the yew-tree. The wall is low, and he is tall you remember. His face looked white through the dark branches ; but it was his face—no mere spirit. But do not mind, Ralph ; you see it makes no difference—at least"—she paused, and put her hand upon her heart, then added, speaking with difficulty—" at least, I think it does not ; but to-morrow, when I have had some rest, I shall know better. I think I shall know a great deal more to-morrow. Good-night, Ralph."

It was strange. Mr. Elphinstone had not believed this could be possible, yet now, with no proof, he believed it true. It was not till later, when he had reflected, that doubt arose. A groan from her husband—a sound of unutterable anguish—brought Lily back to him as she was leaving the room—not to touch him, or with any caressing words try to comfort him, as a wife who had learned to love him might have done, but just to stand before him, leaning heavily for support on the thing nearest her, and wait.

" What is it, Ralph ? " she asked, after a time, " To you, at least, it makes no difference, and I—I cannot suffer more. "

" To me it makes the difference between heaven and hell," he groaned. " I did not think my lot too blessed before—but now—— Oh, woman, whom I dare not call wife, forgive me ! You have felt little of my love but its cruelty—have known nothing of my suffering but its savageness. I took your life into my keeping, and I have bruised it and ruined it. You said—I don't know when, the time seems long since—that I did not know of your nightly visit to the child's grave ; I have followed you and watched over you till I felt my heart being torn fibres from fibre, and my

reason plucked up by the roots through witnessing your anguish—your irremediable anguish."

"Oh, Ralph!"

She knelt before him now, clinging to his knees.

"Suffered! what have I not suffered? I have suffered, as I have sinned, for us both. I was passive, for I saw no help. No help?—I see help now—I will seize it for you—you shall be free."

"Yes, Ralph," she said, faintly; "very soon. I feel that I shall soon be free." She was too weak and faint, too weakly senseless to grasp the meaning of his words.

"Go and rest now, till the morning," he said, lifting her up. "Rest till the morning—see what that brings you."

She kissed his hand with a cold and timid kiss, and murmured—

"May God have pity upon us. I think He will, for we have pity upon one another."

Then she left him. Sunk in thought, he did not see with what weak and wavering steps she crossed the room.

He remained just in the attitude in which she left him for perhaps an hour, then suddenly he sprang up.

"I must know first," he said; "not leave her doubly desolate with a legacy of horror."

He ordered his horse, inventing, for the benefit of his servants, some specious pretext for riding at once, late as it was, to the town. At midnight he returned; the house was then closed, and the servants went to bed. He shut himself into his study; there he remained some hours, writing and looking over papers. When he had finished, he enclosed his private keys in a sealed packet, which he addressed to his wife. This packet, with some letters, one of which was also to her, he placed conspicuously on the centre table. All this done, he fumbled for something in a drawer, found it, and hid it in his breast. Doing that, he felt the little book still hidden there. He drew it forth, and looked towards the fire, but that had been out for hours. He thought a moment.

"It is *his*," he said. "It should go with her." Of this, too, he then made a sealed packet, which he addressed as one of the letters was addressed.

Afterwards he looked round the room with a long, comprehending look. Then he bared and bent his head. "God have mercy upon my soul, and make her happy," is what he would have said. Perhaps he did say it, but he could not pray it. What did he care for his miserable self, soul or body. He went to the window and opened it, letting in the chill and ghastly dawn. He had one foot on the terrace outside, one still within the room: one hand clasped that thing hidden in his breast, while the other held back the shuttered window, when he felt something pass before his face. It was with him as with one of old—fear and trembling came upon him, the hair on his head lifted itself up, and the blood about his heart stood still. He saw nothing, heard nothing with his outward

ears, he only *felt*. Was it a chill breath blown from the dawn? Nothing near him had been stirred. Great awe was upon him. He stepped back into the room; he was now impelled to see her once again before—. Afterwards? He did not know—the resolute will had suddenly melted within him; he felt weak and feeble as a child.

"Once again—yes; I will see her once again."

He stole up the stairs and along the gallery to the door of his wife's room. As he opened it an icy cold wind blew on his face; the lattices of one window were pushed open wide. The gust blew out the flaring candles, which till then had been burning on the table.

The grey light of the dawn fell full on Lily's face. She lay on the bed, dressed as when she left him, her attitude that in which one flings oneself down in intense weariness; she had not moved since she threw herself down there, the bed showed no signs of any tossing or struggling. He bent over her, lower, lower; presently his cheek touched hers: his hand left its hiding-place—something clashed down upon the ground; he heeded that no more than she did—no more than the dead did. He raised himself to look at her again. After a long gaze he said aloud—"Free—at rest—thank God!" The sound of his own voice stirred him; he knelt beside her, and wept like a child or a woman: yet no, no whit like either, but like a strong man, whose will is broken; and his heart melted within him.

There are lives that wear out the hearts that live them with their weariness, till, for very tiredness, the sufferer goes to the grave as happier human creatures to the night's rest. Lily had been subject to long and deadly swoonings; this was the longest and deadliest, and the last.

When he had laid his wife to her rest, Mr. Elphinstone recognized that he had parted with her eternally. What, in any other state of being, had he to do with a woman whose eyes, lips, and life had voluntarily and involuntarily said, "I do not love you?"

Hindu festival of the Pongal.

ONE of the most characteristic festivals of the Hindus is the Pongal—literally, the Boiling—a religious ceremonial of great antiquity, which is celebrated annually in Southern India. Its rites and observances extend over seven days, and serve to exhibit the Hindus and their primitive usages in a striking point of view.

The recurrence of this festival engrosses the Hindu community for a considerable time before the appointed day. Social etiquette requires that, whatever else be left undone, the Pongol must be performed with due pomp and in the accustomed style. There is consequently an universal rush to the village bricklayer, if we may so call a man who scarcely lays a brick in a lifetime. Every house must be in perfect order. This is no slight matter. The monsoon has but just concluded, and numerous indeed are the tokens that remain to tell of its visit. Mud walls are excellent things in a hot climate, except when exposed to the rains that deluge the country to the depth of perhaps ten inches in twenty-four hours. When the bricklayer has repaired breaches and propped up declining walls, the house-decorator steps in to whitewash every room in the building. He adds the wondrous designs in water-colour that adorn the *pial*, or verandah of the soucar, and other respectable men. Wonderfully spirited are some of these drawings, although perspective and proportion are altogether forgotten : a lion or a tiger is depicted springing with outstretched paws upon a valiant sepoy, who being the popular hero, is of course always victorious. A favourite subject is a representation of a British soldier under the paws of a tiger. The painter often luxuriates in vivid representations of Krishna or Ganessa in some amusing character. Larger houses are decorated with an elaborate picture of Vishnu reclining upon the many folds of the snake Sesha, that bears him safely upon the swelling waters. At his feet sits Sakhma, his favourite wife. The seven heads of the serpent bend over him to afford the shade that both gods and men require in the tropics. From his navel rises a lotus-stem, whose flower contains Brahma in the act of creating the world.

Inside the house business of equal importance is being transacted. The wife, who is also the head-cook, must needs purchase an entire supply of new chatties—the earthen vessels used for almost all domestic purposes. No old vessel must be used at Pongol—that would be desecration. Long and loud are the discussions as to the quality and description of the cloths that shall be bought. The shelves of every bazaar groan under the piles of tissues of gold, silver, or plain cotton—gorgeous in tint, though simple in pattern. What Whitewhite is to the

English artisan, that is Pongol to the Madrasee—a time for the putting on of new clothes. Nor is the rice-merchant less busy. The Hindu will not eat new rice ; his stomach can only digest the grain that has been stored for many months. Now, however, new rice alone must be used, for the Pongol is the feast of in-gathering. Strange, indeed, would it seem to the gods if those who made solemn thanksgiving for the plentiful harvest did not partake of its bounty. So, for a week or two before the feast, the rustic grain-floors are ransacked for the finest of their contents to give due honour to the deity. Every class experiences the genial influence ; many a poor man looks to the proceeds of the week before Pongol to enable him to celebrate the feast for himself ; in short, universal generosity prevails. Thousands of young couples who have left the parental roof in search of employment in cutcherry or commission, are gladdened by the receipt of new cloths, or, it may be, a pot of ghee or bag of rice, from the "old folks at home," in order that the feast may be suitably kept without trenching on small means, or resorting to the greedy sousear or money-lender. No little money passes from end to end of the land in the form of rough hoondees. Here and there a poor debtor receives back his unsatisfied bond, and many a despairing creditor obtains his due as Pongol approaches. Compromises replace suits, and arbitrators lighten the work of the judges. It is necessary that every one should be happy when the merry Pongol comes.

All these influences culminate in the early days of January, when, according to Hindu astronomers, the sun enters the tropic of Capricorn, bringing with it the increased heat that shall make all the earth glad. The feast commences at the moment of transit. For four days the observances continue, and for three more the whole community rests. For a week the boy is excused from school, the labourer and the artisan from their work ; the sepoy has no drill, though he cannot escape his turn for mounting guard. Even the very beasts share in the universal rest, and, as will be seen, two days out of the four are specially devoted to them.

The first day is called Bhogi Pongol, or Pongol of rejoicing. It is sometimes called Indra Pongol, after the chief of the Vedic deities. For the Puranic, or later Brahmanic gods, have no share in this feast, which is a relic of the old Aryan days, when Hebrews, Gauls, and Teutons dwelt with them in the trans-Himalayan tablelands. No particular god is worshipped except Indra, who controls the air and rain, without which there would be no harvest. The sun is also adored, but altogether as a natural agent, not as a personal deity. Thus we see plainly that the feast is dedicated really to the elements—air, sun, and rain—immediately concerned in the production of the harvest. As far as I am aware, India does not show such another example of a Vedic festival so free from admixture with Brahmanic importation. Of course the Brahmins have tried to pervert it, as they have done almost every other custom in the Indian peninsula. Many and not altogether unsuccessful attempts have been made to fix Krishna into the position of presiding deity. The story pur-

forward is that Krishna, when on earth, became so popular that the people ceased to perform the Pongol to Indra, who, in revenge, poured down a seven days' rain so heavy as to threaten the destruction of everything on earth. To remedy this evil, Krishna lifted up the huge mountain Govardhana, and held it aloft on the tip of his little finger. The herdsmen ran under it with their flocks, and remained in safety till the rain ceased, when Krishna replaced the mountain. The story is freely told by the people, but they still continue to exclude Krishna from the service. Ganesa, or, in vulgar language, the Belly-god, is always present; this is a modern introduction, but justified by his position as the god of good-luck, or the averter of difficulties. A ball of cow-dung, which represents his ungainly figure, is set up with due ceremony in the courtyard, and adorned with a citron-flower and some grass. A little offering of ghee and flowers fills a plate immediately in front, and the ground for a few feet on every side is sprinkled with water in which the excreta of the cow have been mixed. A mantra or two is repeated, and then Ganesa is supposed to be propitiated. All this is done, however, at every domestic celebration, and no more is intended at the Pongol than that the belly-god should have his dues and feel no inclination to mar the rejoicings that follow.

Before sunrise on the morning of the rejoicing (Bhogi) all the lads in every village are on the alert, for the boys' offering of fire is the first ceremony of the feast. For a day or two previous the juveniles have been busy collecting all the straw, bits of wood, and leaf-stalks, &c., that they can find. Bratties (cakes of dried cowdung) have been bought by those who have pocket-money, and filched by those who have none; for the credit of the family depends upon the size of the heap of "plunder" that stands in the street or courtyard of the house on the eve of Bhogi. Before five o'clock in the morning the torch is applied, and soon the rising flames gladden the eyes of men and boys, and stimulate the joyous antics of the latter as they dance about the fire. The sacrifice of fire is another token of the days when Indra and Agni were Aryan deities, and expresses the thanks of a grateful people. Of course the discordant tones of the tam-tam and pipe resound above the shouts of the boys and the eager conversation of the fathers. When the sun puts out the light of the hearth, the adults march off to the bath. Some castor bathe in oil, and return with their tawny skins glistening like satin, and bearing with them an odour that recalls to the Anglo-Indian the scent of the oil-soaps of the St. Catherine's Docks. The more serious business of the day next commences with the family devotions. We may be quite sure that Pillai-pani, the belly-god, is not forgotten; for if he be not propitious, why perform Pongal at all? The females of the house, who have no share in the family pongoles, are engaged in culinary uses, preparing all kinds of sweetsmeats, from spirals and jets of plain sugar to shreds, soft taffia, and kandis (tiny grapes of sugar-coated boiled in syrup). As the day passes on the store of supplies rapidly diminishes, for every spectator who passes the institution for the family party in the evening leaves with him a

share. The high-flown compliments in which the invitations are couched are characteristic of Oriental politeness.

Every house looks its best, and gorgeous is the costume of the visitors who come with the twilight. A few words, almost a translation of our own Christmas greeting, pass between host and guest, and then the evening passes away in the approved native style. When it is time to go betel-leaf and areca-nut are passed round, and if the host be wealthy, rose-water is sprinkled over the guests. Extravagant compliments pass from one to the other, and then, amidst a shower of fulsome adjectives, the party breaks up, to meet again on the morrow at some other house, and so on to the end of the feast. All this time the children are on the tiptoe of anticipation. "When will the morrow come?" "Who shall boil the rice?" "Will it boil quickly?"

As soon as the sun has risen on the morning of the second day—the great day of the feast, "the Great Pongol," as it is termed, to mark its supreme importance—all eyes are turned to the almanac, to ascertain at what hour the sun crosses the line. Suppose it to be at noon! In the early morning all bathe; no ceremony would be complete without that. The women in some places go down to the tank, plunge in without removing an article of clothing, and after a few minutes come out and go home dripping wet to commence the day's work. This finished, all crowd into the courtyard of the house to see the preparations for the feast. Usually the cooking is done in a room set apart for the purpose, but no room will suffice on this occasion. The rice must be boiled in the open air, under the blessed sun which has ripened the grain, now so thankfully acknowledged. So a fireplace must be built, which is not much trouble in India, and while this is being done, the shatty, or pot, is filled with new rice. Not with this alone, for the Pongol dish of rice is the test of household cookery: by it the wife stands or falls. There are as many recipes for making Pongol rice as for producing good curry. There must be milk, of course; but among poor people the quantity is often very small. Ghee, too, must be present, so must dhol, grain, and perhaps half-a-dozen other things. If the result be really good, any novelty is excused. When it is remembered that the great mass of the people live on rice all the year round, it will be clear that it must be no easy matter to produce a new flavour in rice; and a culinary success is duly appreciated by the guests. The fire must not be lighted until the sun has entered the tropic, and meanwhile giving presents is the order of the day. The house-mother puts together a peace-offering of new chatties, rice-flour, plantains, and whatever else is prized, the bearer of which marches to the sound of a band of two tom-toms and a pipe, at the head of a miniature procession, to the house of the married daughter, where the present is offered to the mother-in-law. Terrible would be the vengeance of the latter upon the young wife if this acknowledgment of her position were forgotten. In this way the time passes away till the critical moment approaches, when with eagst speed the fire is lighted and the shatty placed on the top. With

what care is the process watched ! If the boiling be rapid, good luck will come with every month of the year ; if the fire burn slowly, great is the mourning in that unfortunate house. A Hindu house frequently contains five-and-twenty or thirty members of the family, besides servants, and all are present at the boiling. The hoary grandfather leans upon his stalwart son as he gazes on the sacred fire : even the women conquer their wonted modesty and join the crowd ; the children are, of course, near the front. Happy is the one who can discern the first bubble that tells of the approaching boiling. Those who are stronger or taller press to the front, and whisper to those behind of the progress of the sacred ceremony ; every neck is outstretched, and there is not an eye that does not glisten with delight. In a moment a convulsive movement runs through the assembly, and then men, women, and children lift up their voices and shout "Pongol!" A joyful chorus of "O Pongol!" rising clear and strong, breaks the previous silence. For why ? They have seen the rice-milk slowly rise, and then suddenly with bubbles dancing on its surface swell up to the mouth of the vessel. Pongol means boiling, and the joyous shout is the announcement, "It boils ; oh, it boils." The rite is thus consummated : the sun-god has accepted the thanks, and promises another bountiful harvest when the time shall come. Like as with us of a Christmas morning, when each one wishes "a merry Christmas to you," so now the more active members of the family dodge about among the crowd with the question, "Has the milk boiled ?" They have just seen the operation, but yet the answer comes, "It has boiled." Should the questioner be a superior, or the respondent very polite, the answer is, "It has boiled, through God's grace and *your favour*." For three thousand years the "Festival of the Pongol, or the Boiling," has been annually celebrated in India.

The joy of the household culminates in the feast that follows. Very soon the cooking-vessel is emptied on to a monster leaf-plate that occupies the centre of another portion of the yard, and around it squat the whole gathering. Before each man is a smaller plate of fresh green leaves sewed together, which is universally used by all classes at meals, and when once used is thrown away. Each leafy platter is soon crowned with a mess of the recently cooked rice. But first Ganesa, the belly-god, with his elephant's head perched on the top of a monstrous abdomen, must have his share placed before him, with an invocation. From the back of the seat that serves him for chair and chariot, he gives assent. Then the repast commences. It is a genuine love-feast. All sit down together, old and young, rich and poor. Have not Indra and Surya blessed them all, and should not all join in the glory of the ceremonial ? The old Aryan brotherhood reigns anew, a perpetual memorial of the infancy of the race. We are carried back to the days when the Jewish household set down to its passover and the sweet symbolism of the feast of in-gathering was first recorded.

The feast over, the siesta commences. When the sun-god has gone far down towards his rest, the women make their appearance, at only

Hindu ladies can. From the crown of the head to the little toe, they glitter with gold and jewels ; they wear rings for fingers, nose, ears and toes ; bracelets, armlets, and anklets ; necklaces of gold coins, often half-sovereigns, pearls, or precious stones ; gold plates richly chased for the forehead and back of the head. One cannot estimate the value of the ornaments of one of these women as she stands in gala dress. The other day a comparatively poor man was robbed of four hundred pounds' worth of jewels belonging to his wife. Where jewels cannot be hung, the cloth is stiff with gold embroidery ; one I saw had cost four hundred and fifty rupees. Nor are the males of the family very far behind in splendour when they walk out to pay their round of visits ; for the women and old men stay to receive visitors. Each house is entered with the question—“Has the milk boiled ?” Quick comes the answer—“It has boiled, by God's grace and your favour.” A little familiar talk follows, and the visitor departs to perform the same ceremony at other houses. Towards evening the fun grows more furious. Well-to-do men must have their nautch ; others watch a band of mummers ; poorer people are satisfied with a musical performance. The musical performance of the Japanese acrobats was but as a faint echo of Madras music, in which the beating of the tom-tom predominates. Hindus seem to like it, or else they take to it as a matter of duty, for certainly Pongol night is hideous with discordant sounds ; and on this occasion everybody enjoys himself in his own way till he is tired.

At sunrise on the third day the people are again astir. Not that this is unusual, for there is one virtue that nobody can deny to the Hindu, and that is early rising. But the teeth-clearing, the morning chat outside the door, and the other过去了 in which the Hindu usually fills up the time that lies so heavily till the morning meal, are sadly abbreviated on the morning of the Mādu Pongol, or Pongol of cows, the third day of the feast. This celebration points very plainly to the earliest history of the Aryans when cattle were their staff, their food, their beasts of burden. It is natural for a simple religious people once in the year to house, adorn, and reward the homely cow that fed the house, drew the plough, trod the corn, and provided the fuel of the family ; and centuries of Brahminical rule have not been able to destroy the simplicity of the festival. Again and again have Krishna and other similar deities been pushed forward to the front of the feast, but in vain. The third day of Pongol is devoted to the cows, unalloyed with legend or priestly imposture.

With the morning light every cow and bullock is led off to the nearest water, if no sacred tank be in the village, and is there carefully washed. I have heard of rose-water being used by some wealthy sybarite, as a final douché, but the tale is spurious. However that may be, it is certain that such care is taken to render the animals clean and sweet as to an European is judicious.

When the washing is over the more elaborate portion of the bovine

toilet commences. On the previous evening a visit has been paid to a corner of the grand bazaar or market, where the air was redolent of perfume of flowers. Garlands of all sizes, from the heavy floral chain to decorate the Brahmin bell to the lighter that is thrown over the neck of the visitor, were there in thousands. A basketful of these chains is purchased and brought home, and yellow chrysanthemums and red oleanders shed their oppressive odour throughout the house. Meanwhile another ceremony is preparing at home. A great earthen vessel is filled with water; they then take saffron, cotton-seeds, and mango-leaves, and steep them in the water till it is discoloured and bitter. By the time this is ready, the cows, washed sweet and clean as cows can be, are brought home; then the males of the house, in solemn procession, bring out the vessel and go round each animal several times sprinkling it as they pass the four cardinal points. Then poojah is performed, the men bowing to the animals and performing what is called the "prostration of the eight members" of the body. This done garlands are brought out and the choicest and largest are heaped upon the animals, and the horns of the cattle are gaudily coloured with paint of various hues; and for the cattle of the head-man of the village nothing less than gold-leaf will do, and his gilded herd outshines the glory of all around. A poor man must be satisfied with yellow ochre. The herd of a man of taste has no two horns alike, they being resplendent with all the hues of the rainbow.

Anxiously the boys watch the next operation. Chains of cocoa-nuts, plantains, and other fruit in season, are fastened upon the neck and horns of the cows. When all is finished a moment of silence is succeeded by an awful drumming of tom-toms, accompanied by yells, screams, and other hideous noises, the ropes that bound the cattle are untied, and the frightened animals, with heads down and tails aloft, dash along the village street into the fields. But vain are their efforts to escape from their tormentors; every bound brings the heavy cocoa-nuts full swing against the animal's nose and legs, and behind follows a yelling mob of urchins in full chase: for whoever can run down one of the oxen and seize the fruit upon it, not only keeps the prize but is sure of good luck through the year.

The rest of the day of Midu Pongol is spent by the cattle in perfect rest and peace; they wander at will through garden, field, or bazaar, eating whatever they like, however choice or expensive the food they may find. Fearful will be the future transmigrations of the individual who looks the gate of his choicest pasture or young green crop, and should any shopkeeper be observed pushing away the intrusive nose of a cow from his basket of rice, plantains, or other delicacy, some grievous accident it is expected will happen to his baskets of stores during the next day or two. The day is for the especial delectation of the oxen and sorely do they need it. It is a deadly sin to slay an ox, but it is very common amusement to twist its tail till almost every joint is broken; and

its skin may be scarred and branded with impunity, and bullocks are worked till they drop from sheer fatigue.

The fourth day is dedicated to the calves, who are treated much in the same way as their parents have been. With sunset of this day ends the religious portion of the festival. The three following days are devoted to social enjoyment. Usually Hindu families keep themselves from private intercourse with other families, in our sense of the word ; although social visits by the men are not unfrequent. Once in the year, however, during Pongol, unlimited hospitality and friendly intercourse is the rule. Great is the joy among the children, for the presents which every visitor must bring are intended chiefly for the little ones. Idols in solid sugar form a very important portion of the gifts, and for days after the juveniles make themselves sick with eating miniature Ramas and Krishnas, Saraswatis and Ganesas, made of sugar.

On the last day what is called the peacock feast is held for the benefit of the girls. A gaudy picture of a peacock, generally accompanied by a monkey, is hung up in one of the rooms of the house. Here the girls assemble and make merry ; prostrations are made before the picture, then somebody tells a story out of one of the *Purana*. After a while sweets are handed round, and sometimes a copy of the picture on the wall is presented to each guest. The evening is spent in talking scandal and criticising and valuing the dresses of the company, which forms almost the sole enjoyment of a Hindu female's life.

Thus ends the Pongol ; leaving behind it reminiscences that afford the chief joy of the year, until anticipations of the next take their place.

A Sad Hour.

This little introduction is to open the door of a home that was once in a house in a pleasant green square in London,—a comfortable family house, with airy and light and snug corners, and writing-tables, and with pictures hanging from the walls of the drawing-room, where the tall windows looked out upon the trees, and of the study upstairs where the father sat at his work.

Here were books and china pots and silver inkstands, and a hundred familiar things all about the house, which the young people had been used to for so long that they had by degrees come to life for them with that individual life with which inanimate things live for the young. Sometimes in the comfortable flicker of the twilight fire the place would seem all astir in the dance of the bright fires which burned in that hearth—fires which then seemed to be, perhaps, only charred coal and wood and ashes, but whose rays still warm and cheer those who were gathered round the home hearth so many years ago.

On one side of the fireplace hung a picture which had been painted by Miss Edgar, and which represented a pretty pale lady, with her head on one side. The artist had christened her Laura. On the chimney-piece, behind the old red pots, the little Dresden china figures, the gilt and loudly ticking clock, stood the picture of a kind old family friend, with a friendly, yet troubled expression in his countenance ; and then, against a panel, hung a little water-colour painted by Hunt, and representing the sweet little heroine of this short history. Opposite to her for a while, was a vacant space, until one summer, in Italy, the father happened to buy the portrait of a little Dauphin or Neapolitan Prince, with a broad ribbon and order, and soft fair hair ; and when the little Prince had come back from Italy and from a visit to Messrs. Colnaghi's, he was nailed up in his beautiful new frame on the opposite panel to the little peasant girl. There had been some discussion as to where he was to be placed, and one night he was carried up into the study, where he was measured with another little partner, but the little peasant girl matched him best ; although the other was a charming and high-born little girl. Only a short time before Messrs. Colnaghi had sent her home in a gilt and reeded frame, a lovely little print of one of Sir Joshua's pictures. She lived up above in the study, and was christened 'Lady Mayjory' by the young people who did not know the little lady's real name. And it happened that, one night in this long ago of which I am writing, one of these young folks, sitting basking in the comfortable warmth of the fire, dreamt out a little history of the pictures they

were lighting up in the firelight, and nodding and smiling at her as pictures do. It was a revelation which she wrote down at the time, and which she firmly believed in when she wrote it; and perhaps this short explanation will be enough to make the little history intelligible as it was written, without any other change.

There was once a funny little peasant maiden in a big Normandy cap and blue stockings, and a bright-coloured kerchief, who sat upon a bank, painted all over with heather and flowers, with her basket at her feet, and who looked out at the world with two blue eyes and a sweet, artless little smile which touched and softened quite gruff old ladies and gentlemen who happened to see her hanging up against the parlour wall.

Opposite to the little peasant maiden was a lady of much greater pretensions. No other than Petrarch's Laura, indeed, in a pea-green gown, with a lackadaisical expression and her head on one side. But it was in vain she languished and gave herself airs;—everybody went up ~~first~~ to the grinning little peasant maid and cried, "Oh, what a dear little girl!"

At first the child, who, you know, was a little French child, did not understand what they were saying, and would beg Mrs. Laura to translate their remarks. This lady had brought up a large family (so she explained to the old gentleman over the chimney-piece), and did not think it right to turn little girls' heads with silly flattery; and so, instead of translating rightly, she would tell the little maiden that they were laughing at her big cap or blue stockings.

"Let them laugh," says the little maid, sturdily; "I am sure they look very good-natured, and don't mean any harm," and so she smiled in their faces as sweetly as ever. And quite soon she learnt enough to understand for herself.

Although Laura was so sentimental she was not utterly heartless, and she rather liked the child; and sometimes when she was in a good temper would tell her great long stories about her youth, and the south, and the gentlemen who were in love with her,—and that one in particular who wrote such heaps and heaps of poetry; and go on about troubadours and the belle-passion, while the little girl wondered and listened, and respected Laura more and more every day.

"How can you talk such nonsense to the child," said the old gentleman over the chimney.

"Ah! that is a man's speech," said the lady in green, plaintively. "Nonsense!—yes, silent devotion. Yes, a heart bleeding inwardly—breaking without one outward sign; that is, indeed, the nonsense of a faithful woman's love! There are some things no man can understand,—no man!"

"I am surprised to hear you say so," said the old gentleman, politely.

"Are you alluding to that creature Petrarch?" cried Laura. "He

became quite a nuisance at last. Always groaning and sighing, and sending me scrawls of sonnets to decipher, and causing dissension between me and my dear husband. The man disgraced himself in the end by taking up with some low, vulgar minx or other. That is what you will find," she continued, addressing the little girl,—"men are false; the truth is not in them. It is our sad privilege to be faithful—to die breathing the name beloved; heighho!" and though she spoke to the little girl, she looked at the old gentleman over the chimney-piece.

"I hear every day of a new arrival expected among us," said he, feeling uncomfortable, and wishing to change the subject; "a Little Prince in a blue coat all covered over with diamonds."

"A Prince!" cried Laura, brightening up,—"delightful! You are, perhaps, aware that I have been accustomed to such society before this?"

"This one is but a child," said the old gentleman; "but they say he is a very pretty little fellow."

"Oh, I wonder—I wonder if he is the little Prince I dreamt of," thought the little girl. "Oh, how they are all talking about him."

"Of course they will put him in here," said Laura. "I want to have news of the dear court."

"They were talking of it," said the old gentleman. "And the other night in the study they said he would make a nice pendant for our little friend here."

When the little peasant maiden heard this, her heart began to beat, so that the room seemed to swim round and round, and if she had not held on by the purple bank she would certainly have slipped down on to the carpet.

"I have never been into the study," said Laura, fractiously; "pray, who did you meet there when they carried you up the other night to examine the marks on your back?"

"A very delightful circle," said the old gentleman; "several old friends, and some very distinguished people:—Mr. Washington, Dr. Johnson, the Duke, Sir Joshua, and a most charming little lady, a friend of his, and all his R.A.'s in a group. Our host's great-grandfather is also there, and Major André, in whom I am sure all gentle ladies must take an interest."

"I never heard of one of them," said Laura, tossing her head. "And the little girl, pray who is she?"

"A very charming little person, with round eyes, and a muff, and a big bonnet. Our dear young friend here would make her a nice little maid."

The little peasant child's heart died within her. "A maid? Yes, yes; that is my station. Ah, what a little simpleton I am. Who am I that the Prince should look at me? What was I thinking about? Ah, what a silly child I am."

And so, when night came, she went to sleep very sad, and very much ashamed of herself, upon her purple bank. All night long she dreamed wild dreams. She saw the little Prince coming and going in his blue velvet coat and his long fair hair, and sometimes he looked at her scornfully.

" You low-born, wretched little peasant child," said he, " do you expect that I, a prince, am going to notice you ? "

But sometimes he looked kind, and once he held out his hand ; and the little girl fell down on her knees, in her dreams, and was just going to clasp it, when there came a tremendous clap of thunder and a great flash of lightning, and waking up with a start, she heard the door bang as some one left the room with a candle, and a clock struck eleven, and some voices seemed dying away, and then all was quite dark and quiet again.

But when morning came, and the little girl opened her eyes, what was, do you think, the first thing she saw leaning up against the back of a chair ? Anybody who has ever been in love, or ever read a novel, will guess that it was the little Prince, in his blue coat, with all his beautiful orders on, and his long fair hair, and his blue eyes already wide open and fixed upon the little maid.

" Ah, madam," said he, in French, " at last we meet. I have known you for years past. When I was in the old palace in Italy, I used to dream of you night after night. There was a marble terrace outside the window, with statues standing in the sun, and orange-trees blooming year by year. There was a painted ceiling to the room, with flying figures flitting round a circle. There was a great blue sky without, and deep shadows came striking across the marble floor day after day at noon. And I was so weary, oh ! so weary, until one night I saw you in my dreams, and you seemed to say, ' Courage, little Prince, courage. I, too, am waiting for you. Courage, dear little Prince.' And now, at last, we meet, madam," he cried, clasping his hands. " Ah ! do not condemn me to despair."

The little peasant maiden felt as if she could die of happiness.

" Oh, Prince, Prince," she sobbed, " oh, what shall I say ? Oh, I am not worthy of you. Oh, you are too good and great for such a little wretch as I. There is a young lady upstairs who will suit you a thousand times better ; and I will be your little maid, and brush your beautiful coat."

But the Prince laughed away her scruples and terrors, and vowed she was fit to be a princess any day in all the year ; and, indeed, the little girl, though she thought so humbly of herself, could not but see how well he thought of her. And so, all that long happy day, the children talked and chattered from morning to night, rather to the disgust of Laura, who would have preferred holding forth herself. But the old gentleman over the chimney looked on with a gentle smile on his kind red face, and nodded his head encouragingly at them every now and then.

All that day the little peasant maiden was perfectly happy, and, when evening fell, went to sleep as usual upon her flowery bank, looking so sweet and so innocent that the little Prince vowed and swore to himself that all his life should be devoted to her, for he had never seen her like, and that she should have a beautiful crown and a velvet gown, and be happy for ever and ever.

Poor little maiden! When the next morning came, and she opened her sweet blue eyes, alas, it was in vain, in vain—in vain to this poor little loving heart. There stood the arm-chair, but the Prince was gone. The shutters were open, the sunshine was streaming in with the fresh morning air; but the room was dark and dreary and empty to her. The little Prince was no longer there, and, if she thought she could die of happiness the day before, to-day it seemed as if she must live for ever, her grief was so keen, the pang so cruel, that it could never end.

Quite cold and shivering, she turned to Laura, to ask if she knew anything; but Laura could only inform her that she had always said so—men were false—silent devotion, hearts breaking without one sign, were a woman's privilege, &c. But, indeed, the little peasant girl hardly heard what she was saying.

"The housemaid carried him off into the study, my dear," said the old gentleman, very kindly, "this morning before you were awake. But never mind, for she sneezed three times before she left the room."

"Oh, what is that to me?" moaned the little peasant maiden.

"Don't you know?" said the old gentleman, mysteriously. "Three sneezes on a Friday break the enchantment which keeps us all here, and to-night at twelve o'clock we will go and pay your little Prince a visit."

The clock was striking twelve when the little peasant girl, waking from an uneasy dream, felt herself tapped on the shoulder.

"Come, my dear, jump," said the old gentleman, holding out his hand, and leaving the indignant Laura to scramble down by herself as best she could.

This she did, showing two long thin legs, cased in blue silk stockings, and reached the ground at last, naturally very sulky, and greatly offended by this want of attention.

"Is this the way I am to be treated?" said she, shaking out her train, and brushing past them into the passage.

There she met several ladies and gentlemen hurrying up from the dining-room, and the little Prince, in the blue coat, rushing towards the drawing-room door.

"You will find your love quite taken up with the gentleman from the chimney-piece," said Laura, stopping him spitefully. "Don't you see them coming hand-in-hand? He seems quite to have consoled her for your absence."

And alas! at that instant the poor little maiden, in an impulse of

gratitude, had flung her arms round her kind old protector. "Will you really take me to him?" she cried; "oh, how good, how noble you are."

"Didn't I tell you so?" said Laura, with a laugh.

The fiery little Prince flashed up with rage and jealousy. He dashed his hand to his forehead, and then, when the little peasant maid came up suddenly, all trembling with shy happiness, he made her a very low and sarcastic bow and turned upon his heel.

Ah, me! Here was a tragedy. The poor little girl sank down in a heap on the stairs all insensible. The little Prince, never looking once behind, walked up very stately straight into the study again, where he began to make love to Sir Joshua's little lady with the big bonnet and the big round eyes.

There was quite a hum of conversation going on in the room. Figures coming and going and saluting one another in a courtly old-fashioned way. Sir Joshua, with his trumpet, was walking up and down arm-in-arm with Dr. Johnson; the doctor scowling every now and then over his shoulder at Mr. Washington's bust, who took not the slightest notice. "Ha! ten minutes past midnight," observed the General, looking at the clock. "It is, I believe, well ascertained that there exists some considerable difference between the hour here and in America. I know not exactly what that difference is. If I did I could calculate the time at home."

"Sir," said Doctor Johnson, "any fool could do as much."

The bust met this sally with a blank and haughty stare, and went on talking to the French lady who was leaning against the cabinet.

In the meantime the members of the Royal Academy had all come clambering down from their places, leaving the model alone in the lamp-lighted hall where they had been assembled. He remained to put on his clothes and to extinguish the lights which had now been burning for some hundred years. At night, when we are all lying stretched out on our beds, how rarely we think of the companies gathering and awakening in our darkened rooms below. Mr. H. C. Andersen was one of the first to note these midnight assemblies, and to call our attention to them. In a very wise and interesting book called *The Nutcracker of Nuremberg* (written by some learned German many years ago) there is a curious account of one of these meetings, witnessed by a little wakeful girl. On this night, alas, no one was waking; the house was dim with silence and obscurity, and the sad story of my little peasant maiden told on with no lucky interruption. Poor, poor little maiden! There she lay a little soft round heap upon the stairs. The people coming and going scarcely noticed her, so busy were they making the most of their brief hour of life and liberty. The kind old gentleman from over the chimney-piece stood rubbing her little cold hands in his, and supporting her drooping head upon his knee. Through the window the black night trees shivered and the moon rose in the drifting sky. The church steeples struck the half-hour, and the people hurried faster and faster.

"Tint, tint, hra," sung a strange little figure dressed in tattered clothes, suddenly stopping on its way. "What have we here? What have we here? A little peasant maid fainting in the moonlight—an old gentleman trying to bring her to! Is she your daughter, friend? Is she dead or sick or shamming? Why do you waste your precious moments? Chuck her out of window, Toby. Throw the babby out of window. I am Mr. Punch off the inkstand;" and with another horrible chuckle the little figure seemed to be skipping away.

"Stop, sir," said the old gentleman, very sternly. "Listen to what I have to tell you. If you see a little Prince upstairs in a blue velvet coat tell him from me that he is a villain and a false heart; and if this young lady dies of grief it is he who has killed her; she was seeking him when he spurned her. Tell him this, if you please, and ask him when and where he will be pleased to meet me, and what weapons he will choose."

"I'll tell him," said Mr. Punch, and he was off in a minute. Presently he came back (somewhat to the old gentleman's surprise). "I have seen your little Prince," said he, "and given him your message; but I did not wait for an answer. 'Twere a pity to kill him, you cruel-hearted old gentleman. What would the little girl say when she came to life?" And Punchinello, who was really kind-hearted, although flighty at first and odd in manner, knelt down and took the little pale girl into his arms. Her head fell heavily on his shoulder. "Oh, dear! What is to be done with her?" sighed the old gentleman, helplessly wringing his hands and looking at her with pitiful eyes; and all the while the moon streamed full upon the fantastic little group.

Meantime the little Prince upstairs had been strutting up and down hand in hand with the English beauty, little Lady Marjory, of the round brown eyes. To be sure he was wondering and longing after his little peasant maiden all the while, and wistfully glancing at the door. But not the less did he talk and make gallant speeches to her little ladyship, who only smiled and took it all as a matter of course, for she was a young lady of the world and accustomed to such attentions from gentlemen. It naturally followed, however, that the Prince, who was thinking of other things, did not shine as usual in conversation.

Laura had made friends with the great-grandfather, who was an elegant scholar and could speak the most perfect Italian. "See what a pretty little pair," said he; "how well matched they are."

"A couple of silly little chits," said she, "what can they know of love and passion?" and she cast up a great quavering glance with her weak blue eyes. "Ah! believe me, sir," said she, "it is only at a later age that women learn to feel that agonizing emotion, that they fade and pine away in silence. Ah-ha! What a tale would it be to tell, that untold story of woman's wrongs and un—unrequited love!"

"Ookedoodee, there's a treat in store for you, young man," said Mr. Punch, skipping by. "Will you have my ruffles to dry your tears? Go it, old girl." And away he went, leaving Laura speechless from indignation. He went on to where the Prince was standing, and tapped him on the shoulder.

"Where do you come from, you strange little man?" said Lady Marjory.

"There are many strange things to be seen to-night," said Punch, mysteriously hissing out his words. "There's a little peasant girl fainting and dying in the moonlight; she was coming to find her love, and he spurned her; and there is an old gentleman trying to bring her to life. Her heart is breaking, and he wants blood to anoint it, he says,—princely blood—shed in the moonlight, drop by drop from a false heart, and it is for you to choose the time and the place. This lady will have to find another cavalier, and will she like him, Prince, with fool's cap and bells, and a hump before and behind? In that case," says Mr. Punch, with a caper, "I am her very humble servant."

Lady Marjory did not answer, but looked very haughty, as fashionable young ladies do, and Mr. Punch vanished in an instant.

"I hope I shall never see that person again," said she. "The forwardness of common people is really unbearable. Of course he was talking nonsense? Little Prince, would you kindly hold my muff while I tie my bonnet-strings more securely?"

The Prince took the muff without speaking, and then dropped it on the floor unconsciously. Now at last he saw clearly, in an instant it was all plain to him; he was half distracted with shame and remorse. There was a vision before his eyes of his little peasant maiden—loved so fondly, and, alas! wantonly abandoned and cruelly deserted—cold and pale and dying down below in the moonlight. He could not bear the thought; he caught Lady Marjory by the hand.

"Come," said he, "oh, come. I am a wretch, a wretch! Oh, I thought she had deceived me. Oh, come, come! Oh, my little peasant maiden. Oh, how I loved her!"

Lady Marjory drew herself up. "You may go, Prince, wherever you may wish," she said, looking at him with her great round eyes, "but pray go alone; I do not choose to meet that man again. I will wait for you here, and you can tell me your story when you come back." Lady Marjory, generous and kind-hearted as she was, could not but be hurt at the way in which, as it seemed, she too had been deceived, nor was she used to being thrown over for little peasant maidens. The little Prince with a scared face looked round the room for some one with whom to leave her, but no one showed at that instant, and so, half-bewildered still and dressing, he rushed away.

Only a minute before the old gentleman had said to Punchinello, "Let us carry the little girl out upon the balcony, the fresh air may

revive her." And so it happened that the poor little Prince came to the very landing where they had waited so long, and found no signs of those for whom he was looking.

He ran about desperately, everywhere asking for news, but no one had any to give him. Who ever has? He passed the window a dozen times without thinking of looking out. Blind, deaf, insensible, are we not all to our dearest friend outside a door? to the familiar voice which is calling for us across a street? to the kind heart which is longing for us behind a plaster wall maybe. Blind, insensible indeed, and alone; oh, how alone! He first asked two ladies who came tottering upstairs, helplessly on little feet, with large open parasols, though it was in the middle of the night. One of them was smelling at a great flower with a straight stalk, the other fanning herself with a dried lotus-leaf; but they shook their heads idiotically, and answered something in their own language—one of those sentences on the tea-caddies, most likely. These were Chinese ladies from the great jar in the drawing-room. Then he met a beautiful little group of Dresden china children, pelting each other with flowers off the chintz chairs and sofas, but they laughed and danced on, and did not even stop to answer his questions. Then came a long procession of persons all dressed in black and white, walking sedately, running, sliding up the banisters, riding donkeys, on horses, in carriages, pony-chaises, omnibuses, bathing-machines; old ladies with bundles, huge umbrellas, and band-boxes; old gentlemen with big waistcoats; red-nosed gentlemen; bald gentlemen, muddled, puzzled, bewildered, perplexed, indignant. Young ladies, dark-eyed, smiling, tripping and dancing in hats and feathers, curls blowing in the wind, in ball-dresses, in pretty morning costumes; schoolboys with apple cheeks; little girls, babies, pretty servant-maids; gigantic footmen (marching in a corps); pages walking on their heads after their mistresses, chasing Scotch terriers, smashing, crashing, larking, covered with buttons.

"What is this crowd of phantoms, the ghosts of yesterday, and last week?"

"We are all the people out of Mr. Leech's picture-books," says an old gentleman in a plaid shooting-costume; "my own name is Briggs, sir; I am sorry I can give you no further information."

Any other time, and the little Prince must have been amused to see them go by, but to-night he rushes on despairingly; he only sees the little girl's pale face and dying eyes gleaming through the darkness. More Dresden, more Chinese; strange birds whirr past, a partridge scrambles by with her little ones. Gilt figures climb about the cornices and furniture; the book-cases are swarming with busy little people; the little gold cupid comes down off the clock, and looks at himself in the looking-glass. A hundred minor personages pass by, dancing, whirling in bewildering circles. On the walls the papering turns into a fragrant bower of creeping flowers; all the water-colour landscapes come to life. Rain beats; showers

fall, clouds drift, light warms and streams, water deepens, wavelets swell and splash tranquilly on the shores. Ships begin to sail, sails fill, and away they go gliding across the lake-like waters so beautifully that I cannot help describing it, though all this, I know, is of quite common occurrence and has been often written about before. The little Prince, indeed, paid no attention to all that was going on, but went and threw himself down before the purple bank, and vowed with despair in his heart he would wait there until his little peasant maiden should come again.

There Laura saw him sitting on a stool, with his fair hair all dishevelled, and his arms hanging wearily. She had come back to look for one of her pearl earrings, and when she had discovered it, thought it would be but friendly to cheer the Prince up a bit, and, accordingly, tapped him facetiously on the shoulder, and declared she should tell Lady Marjory of him. "Waiting there for the little peasant child; oh, you naughty fickle creature!" said she, playfully.

"You have made mischief enough for one night. Go!" said the Prince, looking her full in the face with his wan wild eyes, so that Laura shrank away a little abashed, and then he turned his back upon her, and hid his face in his hands.

So the sprightly Laura, finding that there was no one to talk to her, frisked up into the study again, and descrying Lady Marjory standing all by herself, instantly joined her.

This is certainly a lachrymose history. Here was Lady Marjory sobbing and crying too! Her great brown eyes were glistening with tears, and the drops were falling—pat—pat upon her muff, and the big bonnet had tumbled off on her shoulders, and the poor little lady looked the picture of grief and melancholy.

"Well, I never!" said Mrs. De Sade. "More tears. What a set of silly children you are! Here is your ladyship, there his little highness, not to mention that absurd peasant child, who is coming upstairs and looking as white as a sheet, and who fainted away again when I told her that the Prince's intended was here, but not the Prince. As for her—I never had any pa"

"His highness? The Prince do you mean,—is he safe then?" said Lady Marjory, suddenly stopping short in her sobs. "Tell me immediately when, where, how, did you see him?"

"The naughty creature, I gave him warning," said Laura, holding up one finger, "and so I may tell your ladyship without any compunction. Heigho, I feel for your ladyship. I can remember past times;—woman is doomed, doomed to lonely memories! Men are false, the truth is not. . . ."

"Has he fought a duel,—is he wounded? Oh, why did I let him go!" cried Lady Marjory, impetuously.

"He is wounded," said Laura, looking very knowing; "but men recover from such injuries. It is poor women who die of them without

a g-g-green." Here she looked up to see if the bust of General Washington was listening.

Lady Marjory seized her arm with an impatient little grip. "Why don't you speak out instead of standing there maundering!" she cried.

"Hi-i-i," squeaked the green woman. "Well, then, he likes the peasant girl better than your ladyship, and it is his h-heart which is wounded. It would be a very undesirable match," she continued confidentially, recovering her temper. "As a friend of the family, I feel it my duty to do everything in my power to prevent it. Indeed, it was I who broke the affair off in the first instance. Painful but necessary. Who cares for a little shrimp of a peasant,—at least—I am rather sorry for the child. But it can't be helped, and nobody will miss her if she does die of grief."

"Die of grief!" said Lady Marjory, wonderingly.

"La, my dear, it's the commonest thing in the world," remarked Laura.

"Die of grief," repeated Lady Marjory; and just as she was speaking, in came through the door, slowly, silently stopping every now and then to rest, and then advancing once again, the old gentleman, and Punchinello, bearing between them the lifeless form of the little peasant maiden. They came straight on to where Lady Marjory was standing: they laid the child gently down upon the ground.

"We brought her here," said the old gentleman gloomily, "to see if the Prince, who has killed her, could not bring her to life again."

"O dear, O dear," sighed Punchinello, almost crying.

"Poor little thing, dear little thing." This was from Lady Marjory, suddenly falling on her knees beside her, rubbing her hands, kissing her pale face, sprinkling her with the contents of her smelling-bottle. "She can't, and shan't, and mustn't die, if the Prince or if I can save her. He is heart-broken. You, madam," she cried, turning to Laura, "go down, do you hear, and bring him instantly? Do you understand me, or you will repent it all your life." And her eyes flashed at her so that Laura, looking quite limp somehow, went away, followed by Punchinello. In a minute the Prince came rushing in and fell on his knees beside Lady Marjory.

And so it happened that the little peasant maiden lying insensible in Lady Marjory's arms, opened her sad eyes, as the Prince seized her hand. His presence had done more for her than all the tender care of the two old fellows. For one instant her face lighted up with life and happiness, but then looking up into Lady Marjory's face, she sank back with a piteous, shuddering sigh.

The old gentleman was furious. "Have you come to insult her?" he said to the Prince. "To parade your base infidelity, to wound and to strike this poor little thing whom you have already stricken so sorely? You shall answer for this with your blood, sir, and on the spot I say."

"Hold your stupid old tongue, you silly old gentleman," said Mr. Punch. "See how pale the little Prince looks, and how his eyes are dimly flashing. He has not come hitherto to triumph, but to weep and sing dirges. Is it not so, little Prince?"

"Weep, yes, and sing dirges for his own funeral," cried the old gentleman, more and more excited. "Draw, sir, and defend yourself, if you are a gentleman."

But Lady Marjory, turning from one to the other, exclaimed,—

"Prince, dear Prince, you will not fight this good gentleman, who has taken such tender care of your little peasant maiden. Sir," to the old gentleman, "it would be you who would break her heart, were you to do him harm."

"And why should you want to do him harm?" said the little peasant, rousing herself and looking up, with a very sweet imploring look in her blue eyes, and clasping her hands. "He has done me none. It is the pride and happiness of my life to think that he should ever have deigned to notice me. It would not have been fit, indeed, that he, a Prince, should have married a little low-born peasant like myself."

The Prince, scarce knowing what he did, beat his forehead, dashed hot burning tears from his eyes.

"Sir," said he to the old gentleman, "kill me on the spot; it is the only fate I deserve, it will be well to rid the earth of such a monster. Farewell, little maiden; farewell, Lady Marjory. You will comfort her when I am gone. And do not regret me; remember only that I was unworthy of your love or of hers." And he tore open his blue velvet coat, and presented his breast for the old gentleman to pierce through and through.

Now Lady Marjory began to smile, instead of looking as frightened and melancholy as everybody else.

"Button up your coat, dear little Prince," said she. "You will have to wait long for that sword-thrust you ask for. Meantime you must console the little peasant girl, not I; for it is I who bid you farewell."

"Ah, gracious lady," cried the poor little monster, covering her hand with kisses, "it is too late, too late; a man who has broken her heart, who has trifled with yours so basely, deserves only to die—only to die."

"Let me make a confession," said Lady Marjory, speaking with a tender sprightliness, while a soft gleam shone in her eyes. "Our English hearts are cold, dear Prince, and slow to kindle. It is only now I learn what people feel when they are in love; and my heart is whole," she added, with a blush.

Such kind words and smiles could not but do good work. The little Prince almost left off sobbing, and began to dry his eyes. Meanwhile, Lady Marjory turned to the little peasant maiden:

"You must not listen to him when he talks such nonsense, and is so tragic and sentimental," she said. "He thought you had deceived him,

and cared for some one else. He sobbed it in my ear when he went away to find you."

"Hey-de-dy-diddle," cried Punchinello, capering about for joy; "and I know who told him—the woman in green, to be sure. I heard her. Oh the languishing creature! Oh the pining wild cat! Oh what tender hearts have women! Oh what feelings—what gushing sentiment!"

"You hold *your* tongue, you stupid Mr. Punch," said the old gentleman, who had put up his sword, and quite forgiven the little Prince.

"And so good-by, dear friends," said Lady Marjory, sadly indeed, but with a face still beaming and smiling. "See the moon is setting; our hour is ended. Farewell, farewell," and she seemed to glide away.

"Ah, farewell!" echoed the others, stretching out their hands.

The last rays were streaming from behind the house-tops. With them the charm was ending. The Prince and the peasant girl stood hand in hand in the last lingering beams.

"Good-night," said Punchinello, skipping away.

"Farewell," said the old gentleman.

"Goodness! make haste," said Laura, rushing downstairs, two steps at a time. . . .

It seemed like a dream to the little peasant child, still standing bewildered. One by one the phantoms melted away, the moon set, and darkness fell. She still seemed to feel the clasp of the little Prince's hand in hers, she still heard the tones of his voice ringing in her ears, when she found herself once more on her bank of wild-flowers, and alone. . . .



Some Chapters on Talk.

(CONCLUSION.)

XV.—ANTAGONISTIC TALK.

LET any one who knows what the thing is say if there is not something suggestive of the battle-field about one of those special entertainments which may be called "clever parties," and which are given at certain houses in London. I am not speaking now of merely fashionable entertainments or of very numerously attended dinner-parties, but of such a carefully arranged assembly as it sometimes falls to the lot of the diner-out to join, where almost every man in company is celebrated for something, and where the women are clever, and keen, and initiated, and of the world. As you sit down to dinner on an occasion of this sort, and glance up and down the table, I say that there is something, if you happen to be a stranger to most of the company, that one is forced to regard as just a little imposing about the look of the scene. A little imposing, and to one in a good and wholesome state of mind and body, not a little stimulating. What does that up-and-down glance convey to you? It conveys, first, a sense of light, and brightness, and sparkle—light, of clustered candles all ablaze together; brightness, of radiant table-linen, spotless and crisp; sparkle, of glass, of china, of plate, of many-coloured flowers and crystallized fruits, of blocks of ice, of ladies' glittering jewels. Perhaps you see these things before you see the guests themselves sitting round the table, perhaps you see them later, perhaps you see them not at all, only receiving an impression of them mechanically, and without knowing it. Be this as it may, it is certain, that before you have been seated long you will begin to examine the living surroundings of the table—the guests with whom you are sitting at meat. They are all moving and swaying about at first, settling themselves in their places, the ladies taking off their gloves and placing them by their finger-glasses, the men unfolding their napkins. Everybody looks about a little, and one or two ladies use their gold double eye-glasses to aid their observations. The clean black and white men, and the coloured ladies, pink, blue, primrose, are in a row before you and on either side. You take the men first, perhaps, in your scrutiny. One of these is an under-secretary, another is a civil servant; this one is a Saturday reviewer, that a renowned artist much "in society." There is a celebrated traveller, too, who knows about Abyssinia; and one or two men with a speciality, an inventor, a police magistrate, a generalissimo of fire

brigades. There will be present, moreover, in such an assembly as this, one or two men whom at first sight you will set down as mere well-dressed nobodies, but, on inquiry, you will find that these, too, are distinguished in their way—distinguished, one by his immense wealth, another by his high rank, a third by the possession of a young wife, who is pretty and fascinating, and who can hardly be invited without her natural protector.

The ladies who sit between these distinguished personages are themselves well known in the world. There are one or two exceedingly clever ones, not—let it be understood—what are called strong-minded women, who wear waistcoats and give lectures, but thoroughly initiated women of the world; who know what is going on, who can discuss politics and public questions, up to a certain point; who are well informed as to the things which society takes note of; who are sharp and swift to understand, and who can tell a good story cleverly, as well as listen to one intelligently. There are certain matrons of this type to be met with in our London world, whose cleverness, and, above all, whose quickness of wit must be subjects of profound wonder and admiration to all observant persons who frequent the society in which these ladies are to be met. Some of these are professed talkers, who—like professed talkers of the other sex—doubtless prepare a little beforehand for the evening's conversational exploits, keeping their attention on the alert during their day's work or day's play, according to the light in which a morning and afternoon spent in making calls, in receiving the same, in shopping, in attending concerts, and flower-shows, and picture exhibitions, and in driving in the Park, may be regarded by the reader. While engaged in these different pursuits the lady talker will keep her eyes and ears open, just as the male talker will, in the course of *his* daily round, lest anything that would make talk in the evening should haply escape notice. Two or three ladies of the type here described, one or two matrons whose high rank gives them a claim, and a beauty or two—whose husbands, as has been said, are somewhere at table—make up the number of ladies who contribute so largely to the successful general look of a London dinner-table as I have attempted to describe it. I venture to ask, does it not, especially at first sight, look a little formidable? Elsewhere in these chapters, where mention is made of the requirements of a talker, confidence and courage are mentioned among them. They may well be so mentioned. A company such as this, to a nervous man, is perhaps rather an alarming company. Those men are well informed, hard to please or interest, sarcastic, and not a little disposed to be contradictory and antagonistic with strangers. Those ladies, again, are just a little difficult to deal with. They have seen a great deal of life, and it would be a hard matter to present before them any subject, or any piece of information, in which you might hope to interest them. They are perhaps a little sophisticated; some of them a little cold and worldly; and—accustomed to one set, and to the talk of that set—are somewhat discouraging towards anybody who does not precisely belong to it. For there

are all sorts of societies in this vast world of London. So many that two people may go out, night after night, for a whole season, both frequenting perfectly good company of its kind, and yet, because their sets are different, may not meet twice in the time. This being so, it sometimes happens, as in the case we are supposing, that you find yourself in a very brilliant company which is composed entirely, or nearly so, of persons who are unknown to you ; and, under those circumstances, it is not unlikely that you may find your conversational path beset by snares and pit-falls. It is at such a time that a talk student, who is not as yet well versed in his art, or qualified for the encounter by many previous struggles, and much previous experience, will be sharply and severely tried ; and it is with the object of informing or reminding such of what they have to expect when entering certain circles, that this chapter is written. It is not intended to discourage the beginner, but only to put him on his guard and help him.

There is just now, it must be borne in mind, a spirit of antagonism abroad, which shows itself on all sorts of occasions when men are met together ostensibly with the object of enjoying themselves and engaging in what is facetiously called friendly intercourse. This spirit pervades, in an especial degree, such a company as that in which we find ourselves in this chapter. There are, indeed, members of our society in London, and they are neither few in number nor insignificant in position, in whom this same tendency to antagonism is developed to so extraordinary an extent that the gratifying it seems to be almost the only object which they have in going into the world at all. To lie in wait for other men, to watch for an opportunity of pouncing upon some mistake or detecting some inaccuracy, seem to be the sole object and reason of their engaging at all in what are called social amusements. Men of this sort are great at contradiction. If you say, in the presence of one of them, that Cologne is the dirtiest town which you ever set foot in, he is quite sure to assert that he has visited that city a great many times, and at all seasons of the year, and has always been quite struck by the cleanliness of its streets and of their inhabitants. "I suppose you are aware," he adds, "that, judging by the sanitary reports, the healthiness of Cologne is considerably above the average, and that in respect of drainage and water supply, it is looked upon as very much ahead of any town in Germany."

Of this school, which surely everybody will agree has in these days many disciples, it is likely enough that you would meet with more than one professor on such an occasion as that which we are now considering. It would be rash in no ordinary degree for a mere student to venture to engage such a person in argument. But beginners sometimes are rash, and let us suppose that you have done so. Let us suppose that some subject has come up on which you are determined to express your opinion. That of horse-eating is as likely to be brought forward just at this particular period of the world's history as any other. You have made up your mind to join in the conversation on this enticing topic, and

you straightway commit yourself to an opinion which is unfavourable to the use of the meat in question as an article of human food. Instantly the gentleman opposite is down upon you. Why do you object to it? he asks. Have you any argument to put forward against it? You probably reply to this that there is something repugnant to you about the idea of eating horse-flesh. And here you get a fall at starting; for, on being pressed for an answer as to why the idea is repulsive, you are compelled—having really no better reason handy—to acknowledge that it is a matter of feeling; and, further, to admit that we in this country have always been accustomed to regard the idea of eating horse as a disgusting proceeding. I fear that our contradictory gentleman will look a little contemptuous when he hears this answer. Really, he says, looking about him gravely, in the presence of such practical difficulties as those by which we are just now surrounded—the providing the poor with food to eat being one of them—he thinks that questions of mere feeling—why did you let that unlucky word slip?—can hardly claim much consideration; while as to our not being accustomed to regard horse-flesh in the light of a fit article for human food, he would be glad to know how we are to get accustomed to that idea, or, indeed, to any other, if we refuse to entertain it at first starting. The horse, he goes on to say, is a singularly clean-feeding animal, much more so than are ducks, pigs, and many other creatures which we use for food without the least hesitation. This has been a bad beginning of yours, and after this first failure it is likely that you will change your tactics, and fall back upon a more practical view of the question. You believe that horse-flesh must be tougher than other meat. The hard work which a horse does, you say, must make his flesh, which consists of the muscles which the animal uses in his labour, both tough and stringy. Your opponent asks you if it is a fact that such is the effect of work upon the flesh of animals, and you respond that you believe it is: are not the legs of a fowl, which are in continual use, more tough than the wings, which it never uses at all? The enemy has not observed this phenomenon. A leg of mutton is tender enough, he says, yet the sheep uses its legs incessantly. The leg, you persist, is not so tender as the loin, but this again your opponent fails to perceive. All he knows is that he dined off a saddle of mutton—which is two loins—a couple of days ago, at the club, and it was so tough that he made a complaint to the committee.

Now what can you, a neophyte and beginner, do against a man like this? What can you do against his neighbour next but one—a member of this same contradictory school, but practising his art with a difference. This is the man who sits by and sneers; the man who lies in wait that he may be ready, in case you should make some trifling mis-statement or be guilty of some small inaccuracy, to descend upon you and expose you without mercy. The kind of person this, who, when you introduce into your talk your favourite passage about the “man who has not music in

his soul," grimly inquires from whom you are quoting, and who then meets your somewhat indignant reply that the passage in question is from Shakespeare of course, with a calm assertion that there is no such line in the whole of that author's works. Then, after a little pause, he remarks, "The line which you are probably thinking of runs thus:—'The man that hath *no* music in himself,' and is in the first scene of the fifth act of *Merchant of Venice*." A most difficult personage to get on with certainly, even for an hour or two after dinner. He sets you right in your quotations, and in your facts and figures. He is for ever bringing the conversation up abruptly with some set phrase: "I must beg to differ with you there;" or, "Are you quite sure that those are the exact facts of the case?" There is, in truth, no way of entirely baffling him. If he cannot discredit your statements, either by reason of you, wisely, not making any, or because of their being, when made, of the impregnable "two and two are four" order, he then takes to contradicting your opinions, and this in a cynical and sneering fashion which is not without aggravation. Suppose, for instance, that on one of those occasions when this amiable person's combative appetite is at its sharpest, you, whom he regards for the time as his natural enemy, venture to express your admiration of some act of generosity—some one of those princely deeds by which, from time to time, certain great philanthropists have electrified the world—how would your outburst of admiration be received by the contradictory gentleman opposite? We should be careful, he would say with a slight sneer upon his countenance, how we allow our enthusiasm to become excited by things of this sort. Very likely this proceeding was, after all, only an act of the barest justice. Very likely this great philanthropist, whom everybody is in such a state about, was only expiating some piceo of flagrant dishonesty of which he had been guilty in trade, and so administering a sop to his conscience.

This is the kind of argument which a man of this sort will sometimes take up out of pure contradiction. And, when once he is embarked in this vein, there is positively no end to the lengths to which his love of opposition will carry him. He will tell you that Howard the philanthropist was notoriously actuated by a morbid love of popularity, and by a restlessness of nature which amounted to a disease; and that Curtius jumped into the gulf, not in the least from a desire to save his fellow-citizens, but because he was hopelessly and irretrievably in debt, and had, besides, notoriously got into a desperate entanglement with a married lady who lived in a certain villa on the Appian Way.

Altogether, then, it cannot be denied that there is much to be encountered by the adventurous person who dares to enter that social arena of ours in which the gladiators fight with words and looks, upon a field of white damask. Our feasts now-a-days are not entirely love-feasts, and they differ from those at which our ancestors used to sit in this one particular at least,—that the guests may never venture, when they enter the banquet-hall, to leave their armour outside.

XVI.—LADIES' TALK.

In the last chapter an attempt was made to convey something like a true impression of the general aspect of a London dinner-table surrounded by guests. An attempt was also made to show that there is generally developed among these last, in the present day, such a measure of antagonism, and such a critical spirit withal, as makes the conducting of anything in the shape of talk in such a company a difficult thing to those who are inexperienced and uninitiated. Some of the difficulties which such a person would be likely to encounter under such circumstances were discussed, but not all. There were ladies, it will be remembered, among the members of that goodly company, and as the aspiring conversationalist should certainly endeavour to ingratiate himself with these powerful members of society, it seems desirable, as a possible means thereto, that he should make some attempt to get acquainted with the conversational habits of this important section of the creation.

Talk, as it is practised by women, is a widely different thing from talk as it is engaged in by men. The conversational performances of the first are in some ways superior, and in others—if I may dare to say so—inferior to those of what the conventional talker would call the “rounger sex.” Ladies are in their talk always quicker and more sensitive than men. They have a lighter touch, and—glorious distinction—they are much more rarely guilty of boring. A female bore is indeed altogether a phenomenon and exception, which, as we most of us know, is far from being the case with regard to the male specimen; while, as to that lightness of touch and quickness which so greatly distinguish women in their talk, these are so wonderful that it is a curious study sometimes to watch their manifestations; as when, for instance, you see two talkers of different genders yoked together in an unequal conversation, the man being of the slow and ponderous sort, and his partner light and swift of perception. How she tries under such circumstances to make short cuts from point to point of his systematic narration, doubling and bending like a hunted hare. “So you got to the inn, and what then?” or, “Did the marriage take place after all?” asks the suffering lady; but her interlocutor is not to be dealt with in such fashion. “You must not be in such a hurry,” he says, smiling blandly; “I am coming to that presently.” This greater swiftness of perception in women is a very brilliant and attractive quality, and one of which they are conscious and proud. Their mental machinery works more quickly and easily than does that of men. In that kaleidoscope-like welling up of thoughts which seems to take place in the mind, theirs seem to be thrown to the surface in greater abundance and more rapidly than are those of men. A woman will never sit long together without some available thought coming up. Her fancy is richer than ours is, and she has more fecundity of ideas.

But this greater fecundity produces widely different results in different individuals. In women of high capacity and intelligence it leads to the development of many very delightful social qualities. They have a readiness of resource which enables them to say the very thing that is most right, at the very moment when it is most wanted, to rectify the blunders of other people—of their stupid male relatives notably—to anticipate and prevent some threatening *contretemps*, or to counteract its effect a moment after its occurrence. It enables them to set the talk going at critical moments, and to keep it alive with bright answers and lively repartee always. It gives them the power of keeping people in good humour, or of restoring their equanimity when it is gone. This abundance of ideas and quickness of fancy with which women are for the most part so well endowed, leads, then, in certain cases, to all sorts of good and wholesome results. In other cases, however, where the capacity is lower, those same qualities have a different issue, and are shown chiefly in the development of an extraordinary power of *running on* with talk of a certain sort, not very exalted in quality, but quite unlimited in amount. This running-on faculty—as enjoyed by the ladies of creation—is certainly worthy of note in a treatise such as this. Its possessors are a class apart, and are more numerous than might be supposed. They seldom leave off or make pauses in their talk, but rather link together the different sections of their monologue with words of uncertain meaning, or repetitions of something already spoken, apparently with the object of getting time in which to collect new ideas, or else of preventing any one else from taking advantage of a pause to cut in. This running-on capacity is not without value in its way, even as it is exhibited in those who are unable to keep it in order, and to regulate it duly; while, as to those others, who possess, in combination with this gift, certain other gifts of intelligence and discretion, it may simply be said of any society which includes such persons within its limits, that it may be congratulated on possessing all that can most completely ornament and enliven it.'

The descriptive powers, again, of women are very great; and here I am not speaking of descriptions of scenery or places, of mountains, lakes, and rivers, or of old towns in Rhine-land, with quaint houses and picturesque churches in every street. I speak rather of things encountered and experiences passed through in the course of an ordinary day. A lady who has this gift of the seeing eye will describe a morning spent in making purchases, or an afternoon visit to her banker's, and will have observed enough queer things during her progress to make good table-talk at the close of day. She has noted the elderly spinster—member of a predatory tribe whose numbers are something alarming—making her rounds among the sugar-plums and preserved fruits at Messrs. Fortnum and Mason's, and dipping into the different receptacles systematically. She has watched the agonies of a furnishing party choosing carpets at Shoolbred's, having no settled opinions of their own, and depending altogether on the judgment

of the young man who exhibited the "goods." She has observed the bridegroom of tender years being victimized by his wife and mother-in-law at Marshall and Snelgrove's, and kept in good-humour by perpetual appeals to his "excellent taste," both on the part of the ladies themselves and also of the young person who does the trying-on. All this she will tell of with a keen perception of point, narrating finally how she paid a visit to her banker's, how she had an interview with "the house," and how "the house," in seeing her to her carriage, pointed out a lady in the outer office, getting money for a cheque, and whispered, "Beautiful for ever—Madam R—— herself," of whom some amount of description probably follows.

But, perhaps, it is in describing a great social scene from beginning to end, in narrating what happened on the occasion of some gathering of friends which circumstances forbade your taking part in, and which you yet long to know about, that this power, as developed in our sister-talkers, shines most brightly. When they give any such description, you get to know so completely *all* about what they tell of. When the particulars of that critical meeting of the two old lovers, who had not seen each other since their respective marriages, and who were to be thrown together in a country-house for three days, are narrated to you; or when the reconciliation visit paid by the niece to the rich aunt, whom she had displeased by her marriage—the unpopular husband accompanying—is described, do you not, as you sit at home and listen, enjoy yourself with a great and unalloyed joy? In treating of such matters as these, some lady-talkers are superlatively good.

At the beginning of this chapter it was hinted—not without a certain amount of diffidence and hesitation—that, while in some ways the ladies of creation are conversationally superior to the lords, there are other respects in which these fair creatures are at some slight disadvantage when compared with the more steady and vigorous male talker. Now, in the course of this brief examination of ladies' talk, it is certain that hitherto we have been compelled only to admire. Wherein, then, it may be asked, does this inferiority of theirs, which has been spoken of, consist? In what form of talk is it that women do not succeed so well as men? The answer to this question is at the end of my pen, and yet I hesitate to commit it to paper, dreading the scrape into which this avowal of opinion may get me. The thing must be done, however. If these chapters—now fast drawing to a close—are not truthful, they are nothing. Speaking the truth then, and shaming somebody who must not be mentioned, I would venture to hazard the assertion that it is, as it seems to me, in the art of telling a story that lady talkers are not entitled to such exalted praise as is their due when other forms of talk are in question. In plain English, I do not think that women, as a rule, tell a story as well as men do.

It would be very difficult, if not impossible, to define, in so many words, in what this one conversational inferiority in women, so sharp of

wit and keen of perception as we know them to be, can consist. Is it in the want of a certain indescribable and subtle under-current of fun and enjoyment, which the story-teller needs? There is, I believe, a larger capacity for social enjoyment in a man's nature than in a woman's. Their mental conformation, their habits, the things which belong essentially to their very lives, go inevitably to produce this result; and I believe that this, and one other cause, are at the root of this phenomenon to which I have ventured to call attention. The one other cause I take to be that women, with a very few exceptions, are not humorous. They do not appreciate Falstaff, or Dogberry, or Sancho Panza, as men do. There are exceptions, of course, to what is asserted here; and most men who have lived in the world must be acquainted with not a few specimens of womankind who can appreciate a good thing when they hear it, who can enjoy humour, in certain forms, very keenly, and who can tell a story *almost* perfectly. But these exceptions prove nothing. Nor am I sure that even these are entirely exceptions. The good thing is enjoyed, the humorous sally is understood, and the story is well told; but the good thing and the humorous sally are appreciated with some slight reserve, the attention divided somewhat between these and that "flaunting woman" opposite; and the story is told with some slight variation in the details, or some small defect in the wording, which would not have been there if it had been told by a male professor who thoroughly knew his business. And so the murder is out, and the accusation—not such a very dreadful one after all—is made.

XVII.—SOME OTHER VARIETIES OF TALK.

And there is another kind of talk, not perhaps very profitable as a subject of consideration, but still sufficiently distinctive, and of a class apart, to be deserving of some notice in this chapter. This is what may be called rich talk—the kind of talk, that is to say, which prevails among rich, or, as they are sometimes called, moneyed men. And here it should be explained that in speaking of "rich men" as we are now doing, it is only a certain class of rich men who are alluded to; those, namely, who have made their money themselves, and who have raised themselves greatly as to social position in so doing. Rich men who have been born in that condition, and who are, so to speak, used to it, do not, as a rule, talk directly or indirectly about their wealth. They wear their riches as old Roman Catholics do their faith, quietly; while the others, who have made their millions themselves, are like the new converts to Rome, and live in a chronic condition of self-consciousness and fuss. So is it with these self-made rich men.

Has it ever happened to the reader to find himself set down in the midst of a company of such persons—men who have become rich through wan-

desirable diligence and ability shown in the cultivation of some industry to which their lives have been devoted, such as the building of engines, the construction of machinery, the working of contracts, or any other of the different processes by means of which fortunes are made in this country? Croesus! what talk it is that one hears on such an occasion. How wonderfully do these men boast; what a tone they take; what sums of money do they deal with in their conversation, talking of thousand-pound notes as if they were threepenny pieces, and of sums which we who are not of the financial world should regard as comfortable fortunes, as if they were mere trifles to be won or lost, just as it happened, in the course of the morning.

"I lost thirty thousand pounds to-day," says one of these rich talkers, with a smile, as he sips his claret after dinner, "through that failure of Piston and Break's. Piston came to me in the morning of the day before yesterday, and told me a cock-and-a-bull story about some Indian contract which the firm had to fulfil, but for which, before they could undertake it, a certain sum of money was required to be sunk in preliminary expenses. Well, I advanced the money, and the long and the short of it was that the whole thing was an utter swindle. There was no question of an Indian contract at all; and Piston has just walked off to the Continent with the whole of my money without even sharing it with the rest of the firm. I don't suppose I shall ever see a halfpenny."

The members of the company express in tolerably strong terms their opinion of the transaction, but do not appear to consider the loss as in any degree a considerable one.

"It isn't the money that I mind," says the first speaker. "It's the being done."

"Not mind the money?" say you, the outsider, who are listening to this wondrous conversation.

"Such losses are all in the way of business," replies the capitalist. "I lose thirty thousand one morning, and I gain fifty thousand the next. I take it as it comes."

Before your understanding has recovered from this rough assault, you find that another of these gentlemen is holding forth in the same strain. It is the host of the evening who is boasting this time. "No," he begins—and a very wonderful, but common, way of opening a conversation it is to prelude what you have to say with this apparently unmeaning monosyllable—"No; my plan with regard to wine is a very simple one. I give Binney a general order, when anything superlatively good comes into the market, instantly to purchase it on my account. I don't care about price, you know. I want a good thing, and a good thing I will have, whatever it may cost. That wine you are drinking now stands me in twenty shillings a bottle; and I've more expensive wine than that, mind you, in my cellar. You'll say it's drinking gold. So it is; and a very good use to put gold to, it ~~seems to me~~."

"What I want," continues this unostentatious gentleman, "is, as I said before, a good thing. It's the same with everything, I don't care what. Take pictures, now. What do I do when I want a picture? First of all, I select a man I can depend upon; then I go to him, and I say, 'Now look here, Sir Edwin, I want one of your finest works. Do it for me, and do it at once. As to terms and all that, I leave everything to you. Any price, any size, any subject.' That's my plan; and what's the consequence? Why, I've got a collection of pictures, as I think you'll admit if you look round these walls, which are equal, if not superior, to what you'll find in any gentleman's house in London."

Such is a brief specimen of the conversation of those self-made rich men, so many of whom are to be met with in almost all mixed companies just now. It is not very pleasant to listen to; there is so much of arrogance and of purse-pride in it. We may easily conceive, however, that the temptation to engage in such self-gratulatory talk must, under the circumstances, be very great; and that it must be extremely difficult for a man to conceal the surprise which must sometimes take possession of him when he realizes the fine position in which his own labours and his own cleverness have served to place him.

I have not much more space at my disposal, but there is one other variety of talk which claims a word or two of comment very imperatively, and on which that word or two must certainly be bestowed. The variety in question is what may be called facetious talk.

Without going so far as to say that the "man who would make a pun would pick a pocket," one may still feel that the individual who sets up as a professed punster and *fargeur* is a person who may justly be regarded with something almost approaching to alarm by all those who desire that general conversation may prosper. For this professed joker, it cannot be too distinctly understood, is not a promoter of talk, but very much the reverse. His efforts are spasmodic and disjointed. A pun leads to nothing; unless, indeed, a second joker happens to be present on the occasion of its delivery, and follows it up with another. This, however, fortunately, does not happen very often; and the usual effect of a pun upon the society to which it is addressed is to produce a pause of more or less duration, according to the greater or less rallying power possessed by the company's constitution. And this silencing influence is not confined to puns, but is exercised also by all sorts of riddles, plays upon words, and the like. The letting off of any of these verbal fireworks is always followed by silence.

Nor is the *fargeur* himself generally of any value as a talker. How can he be? How can he enter thoroughly into any subject, when all the time that such subject is under discussion, he is merely watching the words of those who are speaking, ready to take advantage of any chance expression which the speaker may use which is available for the punster's purpose. The fact is, that he is obliged to be thus perpetually on the

look-out, or he will infallibly let slip some opportunity of displaying his favourite accomplishment.

How trying those interruptions are. If you have something to say which you really want to say, and which—rare combination of things—other people want to hear, how entirely is the wind taken out of your sails by the pun which breaks into your statement, and for the introduction of which something in your narrative has unhappily furnished an opportunity. For you are never safe with a punster. Let the most skilful of talkers inadvertently drop a word which is capable of distortion, or a phrase susceptible of two interpretations, and his prospect of getting on with what he has to say is a bad one. The punster seizes the chance of letting off his squib, and it fizzes and splutters about, and catches the attention of those whom the talker had calculated on as listeners, and who, before it was let off, were really interested in what was being said. Of the devastating effects of such interruptions as these, the guilty individual who is responsible for them seems to think nothing. Indeed one of the most curious effects of this habit of punning on the person who has once contracted it is, that it renders him temporarily insensible to all sorts of influences which he would feel keenly in his better moments. I have seen a punster, when some subject of too grave, or even perhaps distressing a nature to admit of the introduction of a joke has been brought up, absolutely wrestling with the pun which some chance word has suggested to him, with a hardly suppressed grin on his face, and a twinkle of merriment in his eye. And yet this would be a man capable of the warmest affection, and who would put himself out of the way to any extent to serve a friend.

Does anybody really enjoy a pun? Certainly no one but a punster, and even he, as I firmly believe, only likes his own. We all expostulate when any such thing is attempted. We cry jocosely, "Turn him out;" we say that "it really is too bad." We seek to bring shame and discredit upon him by making supernaturally bad puns ourselves, and fathering them upon him—"as So-and-so would say." And yet our indignation is in almost all cases tempered with something of leniency; for the punster is generally popular in spite of this vicious habit of his, and is, in truth, almost always in other respects a very good fellow. Moreover, it must be admitted that this particular offender, like most of the other objectionable talkers whose defects have been pointed out in these pages, has his use. That practice of his of breaking into a conversation is occasionally—as when an acknowledged bore has got the conversational ball into his hands—of real value to society. For the rest I believe that the habit of playing with words is altogether incurable when once a man has got fairly into it, and that, abuse him as we may, the habitual punster will go on punning to the end of time.

XVIII.—TOO MUCH TALK.

So much has been said in these chapters in praise of talk, and so many methods of promoting its exercise have been put forward, that it seems desirable, before bringing these notes to a close, to say something also on the other side—something on what may be called excessive talk—with an example by way of illustration. Let us take, then, the example of that noisy individual, Barker by name, of whom it was said in a previous chapter, that although valuable at a dinner-table on account of the noise which he could be relied on to make, he was wearying to the last degree under any other circumstances, and as a co-resident in a country-house simply unbearable.

The talk of this man begins with the day's beginning. I was going to say that you first hear his voice in the morning echoing along the passages and lobbies into which his chamber door opens, but truth to say, you hear him—if you happen to sleep in a neighbouring room to his—long before he emerges from his apartment. You hear him talking to his servant, as the man lays out his "things" or helps him to dress. What it is that he talks about at this time must, as I do not choose to condescend to pump his valet, ever remain a mystery; but he does talk, and vigorously too, waking in full possession of his faculties, and evidently in no respect muddled or sleepy. When he opens his door, however, and issues forth into the passage, it is different, and his speech is intelligible to all who choose to listen. The matter of that speech depends, of course, upon the nature of the audience which destiny throws in his way. Sometimes a child of the house, or a couple of them, will fall into his clutches, and then he is especially loud and frisky. "What, Walter, up already! why, what a fine boy you are! And where's Jacky, eh? What, still in bed? For shame; why, when I was Jacky's age, I used to be out with the keepers long before this, and up to all sorts of mischief—all sorts of mischief, Walter,—all sorts of mischief;" and his voice gets fainter and more indistinct in the distance, as he tells of these mischievous doings, till at last you hear the breakfast-room door close on him. On another occasion he will run against a housemaid with her brushes and pail. He recognizes her directly. "What, Bush," he says, "and how are you getting on? I remember you very well. I saw your brother only the other day. He is at Lord Baldchild's; I think: yes—oh, yes, he is doing very well—in a good situation as under-gamekeeper, and gives great satisfaction."

I don't know why it is, but this corridor-talk of our friend Barker's seems to me to indicate his nature, and to give the idea of his noisiness, more perfectly than any other of his daily vocal performances that could be treated of. Of course, he does not really talk more in this particular passage or lobby than elsewhere. Wherever he is it is the same story all the day through! During the sixteen or seventeen hours which are

available for conversational purposes, what a prodigious number of words must be formed and issued by that larynx, or those vocal chords which constitute his voice machinery. We have just heard the breakfast-room door close upon him after his corridor-talk. On what a career has he entered. His morning greetings are delivered with a fearless frankness. At once they remind him of something,—of old Croker of the Northern Circuit, who used to say :—" 'Don't wish me a good morning, sir. It's a farce. My morning's going to be spent with thieves and swindlers, and in unravelling every sort of corruption and abomination. Good morning, indeed !' You remember Croker, Sir John ? He was a relative of the judge's. Ah ! a whole pile of letters, I see." His letters always supply him with new matter. He runs them through, muttering the names of the writers, and delivering scraps of intelligence for the public good.

At luncheon-time Mr. B. comes out in a slightly different phase. This good man has his luncheon-talk as well as his breakfast-talk. His luncheon-talk is generally suggested by the nature of the afternoon's prospective arrangements. Sometimes, indeed, he enters the room where the meal is spread already in full conversation with some one whom he has picked up outside, in which case he will go on with what he was saying, just securing the rest of the company as listeners with a parenthetical word.

This, however, is an exceptional case ; generally, as I have said, he will speak at length of the drive to Cragley to call on the Castle people, which is to come off in the afternoon, or of the excursion to the dripping well which the ladies have set their hearts upon. Either of these contemplated expeditions will furnish him with a good plenty to say. Either of them will serve to remind him of some similar enterprises undertaken on previous occasions at home or abroad : as when he was staying in Germany with his old friend, Kate Stanmer ;—"you remember Kate Stanmer ?"—who married a German baron with an estate on the borders of the Black Forest, and when the baron, who was a very good fellow in his way, insisted that they should go over—which they did in light country vans, *voitures de chasse*—and pay a visit to his old mother who lived all alone in a *château*, or rather a *schloss*, in the forest. In like manner, the projected visit to the dripping well recalls to his memory an excursion to the Falls of Terni, organized by the beautiful and accomplished Marchesa Caldesi, of which he favours his hearers with a description, embellished with anecdotes of the guides who led the way, of hospitable peasants who supplied goats' milk, and certain of those graphic descriptions—or what are called graphic descriptions—of the scenery, in which this gentleman is known by all his friends to excel.

There is no possibility of stating distinctly of what this person's talk consists. He belongs to no particular school, to no one of those distinct classes of which mention has already been made, but encroaches at one time or another upon the domains of each of them. He describes expe-

signces with appalling fluency ; he tells stories which appear to those who hear them interminable ; and his bits of gossip are provided without stint. He does not much affect the discussion of topic, it is true, though even that branch of our art is occasionally patronized by him. His great characteristic is his versatility—his hideous and inexhaustible versatility—and his dulness. He is never funny, never interesting, never says anything that you remember or think of afterwards. He talks principally, I think, about his friends,—not yours ; about his relatives, especially such of them as may occupy an elevated position in society, and about his brothers. " Most talkative men," says an eminent living writer, " have a great deal to say about their brothers ; " and there never was a truer remark made. The achievements of some one of their brothers, who has an estate, his improvement of the property, his method of rearing pheasants, his treatment of his tenants, are subjects on which the particular talker with whom we are now engaged will hold forth by the hour together.

We may now, I think, be permitted to escape from this terrible man ; the making acquaintance with him on paper having this advantage over a personal encounter, that we can get away from him whenever we like, while his unfortunate associates in the flesh, after suffering under him in the corridor, in the breakfast-room, at luncheon, and in the afternoon, as we have done also, have got to listen to his discourse during dinner and in the evening, and once again, as he passes along that fatal corridor on his way to bed.

And with this instance of too much talk we conclude.



A Reception at Rome

THE
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The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER XL

"A RECEPTION" AT ROME.



I T was the night of the Countess Balderoni's weekly reception, and the servants had just lighted up the handsome suite of rooms and disposed the furniture in fitting order, when the Countess and Lady Augusta Bramleigh entered to take a passing look at the apartment before the arrival of the guests.

"It is so nice," said Lady Augusta, in her peculiar languid way, "to live in a country where the people are civilized enough to meet for intercourse without being fed, or danced, or fiddled for. Now, I tried this in London; but it was a complete failure. If you tell English people you are 'at home' every Tuesday or every Thursday evening, they will make a party some par-

ticular night and storm your salons in hundreds, and you'll be left with three or four visitors for the remainder of the season. Isn't that so?"

"I suspect it is. But you see how they fall into our ways here; and if they do not adopt them at home, there may be something in the climate or the hours which forbids it."

"No, cara; it is simply their dogged material spirit, which says,

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'We go out for a *déjeûné*, or a dinner, or a ball.' There must be a substantial programme of a something to be eaten or to be done. I declare I believe I detest our people."

"How are you, then, to live amongst them?"

"I don't mean it. I shall not go back. If I grow weary of Europe, I'll try Egypt, or I'll go live at Lebanon. Do you know, since I saw Lear's picture of the cedars, I have been dying to live there. It would be so delightful to lie under the great shade of those glorious trees, with one's 'barb' standing saddled near, and groups of Arabs in their white burnouses scattered about. What's this? Here's a note for you."

The Countess took the note from the servant, and ran her eyes hurriedly over it. "This is impossible," murmured she, "quite impossible. Only think, Gusta, here is the French Secretary of Legation, Baron de Limayrac, asking my permission to present to me no less a person than Monsieur de Pracontal."

"Do you mean the Pracontal—the Pretender himself?"

"Of course. It can be no other. Can you imagine anything so outrageously in bad taste. Limayrac must know who this man is, what claims he is putting forward, who he assumes to be; and yet he proposes to present him here. Of course I shall refuse him."

"No, cara, nothing of the kind. Receive him by all means. You or I have nothing to do with law or lawyers—he does not come here to prosecute his suit. On the contrary, I accept his wish to make our acquaintance as an evidence of a true gentlemanlike instinct; and, besides, I am most eager to see him."

"Remember, Gusta, the Culduffs are coming here, and they will regard this as a studied insult. I think I should feel it such myself in their place."

"I don't think they could. I am certain they ought not. Does any one believe that every person in a room with four or five hundred is his dear friend, devoted to him, and dying to serve him? If you do not actually throw these people together, how are they more in contact in your salon than in the Piazza del Popolo?"

"This note is in pencil, too," went she on. "I suppose it was written here. Where is the Baron de Limayrac?"

"In his carriage, my lady, at the door."

"You see, dearest, you cannot help admitting him."

The Countess had but time to say a few hurried words to the servant, when the doors were thrown open, and the company began to pour in. Arrivals followed each other in rapid succession, and names of every country in Europe were announced, as their titled owners—soldiers, statesmen, cardinals, or ministers—poured in, and "grandes dames," in all the plenitude of splendid toilette, sailed proudly on, glittering with jewels and filmy in costly lace.

While the Countess Balderoni was exchanging salutations with a distinguished guest, the Baron de Limayrac stood respectfully waiting his time to be recognized.

"My friend, Count Pracontal, madame," said he, presenting the stranger, and, though a most frigid bow from the hostess acknowledged the presentation, Pracontal's easy assurance remained unabashed, and, with the coolest imaginable air, he begged he might have the great honour of being presented to Lady Augusta Bramleigh.

Lady Augusta, not waiting for her sister's intervention, at once accepted the speech as addressed to herself, and spoke to him with much courtesy.

"You are new to Rome, I believe?" said she.

"Years ago I was here; but not in the society. I knew only the artists, and that Bohemian class who live with artists," said he, quite easily. "Perhaps I might have the same difficulty still, but Baron de Limayrac and I served together in Africa, and he has been kind enough to present me to some of his friends."

The unaffected tone and the air of good-breeding with which these few words were uttered, went far to conciliate Lady Augusta in his favour; and after some further talk together she left him, promising, at some later period of the evening, to rejoin him and tell him something of the people who were there.

"Do you know, cara, that he is downright charming?" whispered she to her sister as they walked together through the rooms. "Of course I mean Pracontal. He is very witty, and not in the least ill-natured. I'm so sorry the Culduffs have not come. I'd have given anything to present Pracontal to his cousin—if she be his cousin. Oh, here they are; and isn't she splendid in pearls?"

Lord and Lady Culduff moved up the salon as might a prince and princess royal, acknowledging blandly, but condescendingly, the salutations that met them. Knowing and known to every one, they distributed the little graceful greetings with that graduated benignity great people, or would-be great people—for they are more alike than is generally believed,—so well understand.

Although Lady Augusta and Lady Culduff had exchanged cards, they had not yet met at Rome, and now, as the proud peer moved along triumphant in the homage rendered to his own claims and to his wife's beauty, Lady Augusta stepped quietly forward, and in a tone familiarly easy said, "Oh, we've met at last, Marion. Pray make me known to Lord Culduff." In the little act of recognition which now passed between these two people, an acute observer might have detected something almost bordering on freemasonry. They were of the same "order," and, though the circumstances under which they met left much to explain, there was that between them which plainly said, "*We* at least play on 'the square' with each other. *We* are within the pale, and scores of little misunderstandings that might serve to separate or estrange meaner folk, with *us* can wait for their explanations." They chatted away pleasantly for some minutes over the Lord Georges and Lady Georginas of their acquaintance, and reminded each other of little traits of this one's health or that one's temper, as though of these was that world they belonged to made up and

fashioned. And all this while Marion stood by mute and pale with anger, for she knew well how Lady Augusta was intentionally dwelling on a theme she could have no part in. It was with a marked change of manner, so marked as to imply a sudden rush of consciousness, that Lady Augusta, turning to her, said,—

“And how do you like Rome?”

A faint motion of the eyelids, and a half-gesture with the shoulders, seeming to express something like indifference, was the reply.

“I believe all English begin in that way. It is a place to grow into—its ways, its hours, its topics are all its own.”

“I call it charming,” said Lord Culduff, who felt appealed to.

“If you stand long on the brink here,” resumed she, “like a timid bather, you’ll not have courage to plunge in. You must go at it at once, for there are scores of things will scare you, if you only let them.”

Marion stood impassive and fixed, as though she heard but did not heed what was said, while Lord Culduff smiled his approval and nodded his assent in most urbane fashion.

“What if you came and dined here to-morrow, Marion? My sister is wonderfully ‘well up’ in the place. I warn you as to her execrable dinner; for her cook is Italian, pur sang, and will poison you with his national dishes; but we’ll be en petit comité.”

“I think we have something for to-morrow,” said Marion, coldly, and looking to Lord Culduff.

“To-morrow—Thursday, Thursday?” said he, hesitating. “I can’t remember any engagement for Thursday.”

“There is something, I’m sure,” said Marion, in the same cold tone.

“Then let it be for Friday, and you’ll meet my brother-in-law; it’s the only day he ever dines at home in the week.”

Lord Culduff bowed an assent, and Marion muttered something that possibly meant acquiescence.

“I’ve made a little dinner for you for Friday,” said Lady Augusta to her sister. “The Culduffs and Monsignore Batti—that, with Tonino and ourselves, will be six; and I’ll think of another; we can’t be an even number. Marion is heart-broken about coming; indeed, I’m not sure we shall see her after all.”

“Are we so very terrible then?” asked the Countess.

“Not you, dearest; it is I am the dreadful one. I took that old fop a canter into the Peerage, and he was so delighted to escape from Bramleighaia, that he looked softly into my eyes, and held my hand so unnecessarily long, that she became actually sick with anger. Now I’m resolved that the old lord shall be one of my adorers.”

“Oh, Gusta!”

“Yes. I say it calmly and advisedly; that young woman must be taught better manners than to pat the ground impatiently with her foot and to toss her head away when one is talking to her husband. Oh, there’s that poor Count Pracontal waiting for me, and looking so piteously at me;

I forgot I promised to take him a tour through the rooms, and tell him who everybody is."

The company began to thin off soon after midnight, and by one o'clock the Countess and her sister found themselves standing by a fireplace in a deserted salon, while the servants passed to and fro extinguishing the lights.

"Who was that you took leave of with such emphatic courtesy a few minutes ago?" asked Lady Augusta, as she leaned on the chimney-piece.

"Don't you know; don't you remember him?"

"Not in the least."

"It was Mr. Temple Bramleigh."

"What, mon fils Temple! Why didn't he come and speak to me?"

"He said he had been in search of you all the evening, and even asked me to find you out."

"These Sevigné curls do that; no one knows me. Monsignore said he thought I was a younger sister just come out, and was going to warn me of the dangerous rivalry. And that was Temple? His little bit of moustacho improves him. I suppose they call him good-looking?"

"Very handsome—actually handsome."

"Oh, dear!" sighed the other, wearily; "one likes these gatherings, but it's always pleasant when they're over; don't you find that?" And not meeting a reply, she went on: "That tiresome man, Sir Marcus Cluff, made a descent upon me, to talk of—what do you think?—the church at Albano. It seems our parson there has nothing to live on during the winter months, and he is expected to be alive and cheery when spring comes round; and Sir Marcus says, that though seals do this, it's not so easy for a curate; and so I said, 'Why doesn't he join the other army? There's a cardinal yonder will take him into his regiment;' and Sir Marcus couldn't stand this, and left me." She paused, and seemed lost in a deep reverie, and then half murmured rather than said, "What a nice touch he has on the piano; so light and so liquid withal."

"Sir Marcus, do you mean?"

"Of course I don't," said she, pettishly. "I'm talking of Pracontal. I'm sure he sings—he says not, or only for himself; and so I told him he must sing for *me*, and he replied, 'Willingly, for I shall then be beside myself with happiness.' Just fancy a Frenchman trying to say a smart thing in English. I wonder what the Culduffs will think of him?"

"Are they likely to have an opportunity for an opinion?"

"Most certainly they are. I have asked him for Friday. He will be the seventh at our little dinner."

"Not possible, Gusta! You couldn't have done this!"

"I have, I give you my word. Is there any reason why I shouldn't?"

"All the reason in the world. You ask your relatives to a little dinner, which implies extreme intimacy and familiarity; and you invite to meet them a man, whom by every sentiment of self-interest, they must abhor."

"Cara mia, I can't listen to such a vulgar argument. M. de Pra-

contal has charming personal qualities. I chatted about an hour with him, and he is delightfully amusing ; he'll no more obtrude his claims or his pretensions than Lord Culduff will speak of his fifty years of diplomatic service. There is no more perfect triumph of good-breeding than when it enables us to enjoy each other's society irrespective of scores of little personal accidents, political estrangements, and the like ; and to show you that I have not been the inconsiderate creature you think me, I actually did ask Pracontal if he thought that meeting the Culduffs would be awkward or unpleasant for him, and he said he was overjoyed at the thought ; that I could not have done him a favour he would prize more highly.

"*He*, of course, is very vain of the distinction. It is an honour he never could have so much as dreamed of."

"I don't know that. I half suspect he is a gentleman who does not take a depreciatory estimate of either himself or his prospects."

"At all events, Gusta, there shall be no ambuscade in the matter, that I'm determined on. The Culduffs shall know whom they are to meet. I'll write a note to them before I sleep."

"How angry you are for a mere nothing. Do you imagine that the people who sit round a dinner-table have sworn vows of eternal friendship before the soup ?"

"You are too provoking, too thoughtless," said the other, with much asperity of voice, and taking up her gloves and her fan from the chimney-piece, she moved rapidly away and left the room.

CHAPTER XLJ.

SOME "SALON DIPLOMACIES."

LORD CULDUFF, attired in a very gorgeous dressing-gown, and a cap whose gold tassel hung down below his ear, was seated at a writing-table, every detail of whose appliances was an object of art. From a little golden censer at his side a light blue smoke curled, that diffused a delicious perfume through the room ; for the noble lord held it, that these adventitious aids invariably penetrated through the sterner material of thought, and relieved by their graceful influence the more laboured efforts of the intellect.

He had that morning been preparing a very careful confidential despatch ; he meant it to be a state paper. It was a favourite theory of his, that the Pope might be "*exploité*,"—and his own phrase must be employed to express his meaning,—that is, that for certain advantages, not very easily defined, nor intelligible at first blush, the Holy Father might be most profitably employed in governing Ireland. The Pope, in fact, in return for certain things which he did not want, and which we could not give him if he did, was to do for us a number of things perfectly impossible, and just as valueless had they been possible. The whole was a grand dissolving view of a millennial Ireland, with all the inhabitants dressed in green

broadcloth, singing "God save the Queen;" while the Pope and the Sacred College were to be in ecstasy over some imaginary concessions of the British Government, and as happy over these supposed benefits as an Indian tribe over a present of glass beads from Birmingham.

The noble diplomatist had just turned a very pretty phrase on the peculiar nature of the priest;—his one-sided view of life, his natural credulity, nurtured by church observances, his easily satisfied greed, arising from the limited nature of his ambitions, and, lastly, the simplicity of character engendered by the want of those relations of the family which suggest acute study of moral traits, uncompensated by habits of a more reflective kind. Rising above the dialectics of the "office," he had soared into the style of the essayist. It was to be one of those despatches which F. O. prints in blue-books, and proudly points to, to show that her sons are as distinguished in letters as they are dexterous in the conduct of negotiations. He had just read aloud a very high-sounding sentence, when Mr. Temple Bramleigh entered, and in that nicely subdued voice which private-secretaryship teaches, said, "Mr. Cutbill is below, my lord; will you see him?"

"On no account! The porter has been warned not to admit him, on pain of dismissal. See to it, that I am not intruded on by this man."

"He has managed to get in somehow—he is in my room this moment."

"Get rid of him, then, as best you can. I can only repeat that here he shall not come."

"I think, on the whole, it might be as well to see him: a few minutes would suffice," said Temple, timidly.

"And why, sir, may I ask, am I to be outraged by this man's vulgar presence, even for a few minutes? A few minutes of unmitigated rudeness is an eternity of endurance!"

"He threatens a statement in print; he has a letter ready for *The Times*," muttered Temple.

"This is what we have come to in England. In our stupid worship of what we call public opinion, we have raised up the most despotic tribunal that ever decided a human destiny. I declare solemnly, I'd almost as soon be an American. I vow to heaven that, with the threat of Printing-House Square over me, I don't see how much worse I had been if born in Kansas or Ohio!"

"It is a regular statement of the Lisconnor Mine, drawn up for the money article, and if only a tithe of it be true——"

"Why should it be true, sir?" cried the noble lord, in a tone that was almost a scream. "The public does not want truth,—what they want is a scandal—a libellous slander on men of rank; men of note like myself. The vulgar world is never so happy as when it assumes to cancel great public services by some contemptible private scandal. Lord Culduff has checkmated the Russian Ambassador. I know that, but Moses has three acceptances of his protested for non-payment. Lord Culduff has

outwitted the Tuileries.—Why doesn't he pay his bootmaker? That's their chanson, sir,—that's the burden of their low vulgar song. As if I, and men of my stamp, were amenable to every petty rule and miserable criticism that applies to a clerk in Somerset House. They exact from us the services of a giant, and then would reduce us to their own dwarfish standard, whenever there is question of a moral estimate."

He walked to and fro as he spoke, his excitement increasing at every word, the veins in his forehead swelling and the angles of his mouth twitching with a spasmodic motion. "There, sir," cried he, with a wave of his hand; "let there be no more mention of this man. I shall want to see a draft of the educational project, as soon as it is completed. That will do," and with this he dismissed him.

No sooner was the door closed on his departure, than Lord Culduff poured some scented water into a small silver ewer, and proceeded to bathe his eyes and temples, and then, sitting down before a little mirror, he smoothed his eyebrows, and patiently disposed the straggling hairs into line. "Who's there? come in," cried he, impatiently, as a tap was heard at the door, and Mr. Cutbill entered with the bold and assured look of a man determined on an insolence.

"So, my lord, your servants have got orders not to admit me—the door is to be shut against me!" said he, walking boldly forward and staring fiercely at the other's face.

"Quite true, however you came to know it," said Culduff, with a smile of the easiest, pleasantest expression imaginable. "I told Temple Bramleigh this morning to give the orders you speak of. I said it in these words:—Cutbill got in here a couple of days ago, when I was in the middle of a despatch, and we got talking of this that and t'other, and the end was, I never could take up the clue of what I had been writing. A bore interrupts, but does not distract you; a clever man is sure, by his suggestiveness, to lead you away to other realms of thought: and so I said, a strict quarantine against two people—I'll neither see Antonelli nor Cutbill."

It was a bold shot, and few men would have had courage for such effrontery; but Lord Culduff could do these things with an air of such seeming candour and naturalness, nothing less than a police-agent could have questioned its sincerity.

Had a man of his own rank in life "tried it on" in this fashion, Cutbill would have detected the impudent fraud at once. It was the superb dignity, the consummate courtesy of this noble viscount, aided by every appliance of taste and luxury around him, that assured success here."

"Take that chair, Cutbill, and try a cheroot—I know you like a cheroot. And now for a pleasant gossip; for I will give myself a holiday this morning."

"I am really afraid I interrupt you," began Cutbill.

"You do; I won't affect to deny it. You squash that despatch yonder as effectually as if you threw the ink-bottle over it. When once I get to

talk with a man like you, I can't go back to the desk again. Don't you know it yourself? Haven't you felt it scores of times? The stupid man is got rid of just as readily as you throw a pebble out of your shoe; it is your clever fellow that pricks you like a nail."

"I'm sorry, my lord, you should feel me so painfully," said Cutbill, laughing, but with an expression that showed how the flattery had touched him.

"You don't know what a scrape I've got into about *you*."

"About *me*?"

"Yes. My lady heard you were here the other morning, and gave me a regular scolding for not having sent to tell her. You know you were old friends in Ireland."

"I scarcely ventured to hope her ladyship would remember me."

"What! Not remember your admirable imitations of the speakers in the House?—your charming songs that you struck off with such facility—the very best impromptus I ever heard. And, mark you, Cutbill, I knew Theodore Hook intimately,—I mean, difference of age and such-like considered, for I was a boy at the time,—and I say it advisedly, you are better than Hook."

"Oh, my lord, this is great flattery!"

"Hook was uncertain, too. He was what the French call *journalier*. Now that you are not."

Cutbill smiled, for, though he did not in the least know the quality ascribed to him, he was sure it was complimentary, and was satisfied.

"Then there was another point of difference between you. Hook was a snob. He had the uneasy consciousness of social inferiority, which continually drove him to undue familiarities. Now, I will say, I never met a man so free from this as yourself. I have made a positive study of you, Cutbill, and I protest I think, as regards tact, you are unrivalled."

"I can only say, my lord, that I never knew it."

"After all," said Lord Culduff, rising and standing with his back to the fire, while, dropping his eyelids, he seemed to fall into a reflective vein—"After all, this, as regards worldly success, is the master quality. You may have every gift, and every talent, and every grace, and, wanting 'tact,' they are all but valueless."

Cutbill was silent. He was too much afraid to risk his newly acquired reputation by the utterance of even a word.

"How do you like Rome?" asked his lordship, abruptly.

"I can scarcely say; I've seen very little of it. I know nobody; and, on the whole, I find time hangs heavily enough on me."

"But you *must* know people, Cutbill; you *must* go out. The place has its amusing side; it's not like what we have at home. There's another tone, another style; there is less concentration, so to say, but there's more 'finesse.'"

Cutbill nodded, as though he followed and assented to this.

"Where the priest enters, as such a considerable element of society,

there is always a keener study of character than elsewhere. In other places you ask, What a man does ? here you inquire, Why he does it ?"

Cutbill nodded again.

"The women, too, catch up the light delicate touch which the churchmen are such adepts in ; and conversation is generally neater than elsewhere. In a fortnight or ten days hence, you'll see this all yourself. How are you for Italian ? Do you speak it well ?"

"Not a word, my lord."

"Never mind. French will do perfectly. I declare I think we all owe a debt of gratitude to the First Empire for having given us a language common to all Europe. Neither cooking nor good manners could go on without it, and àpropos of cooking, when will you dine here ? They are good enough to say here that my cook is the best in Rome. When will you let me have your verdict on him ?"

Cutbill felt all the awkwardness that is commonly experienced when a man is asked to be his own inviter.

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"To-day," continued Lord Culduff, "we dine at the Duc de Rignano's ; to-morrow, we have promised Lady Augusta ; Friday, we are engaged to the Russian Minister ; and Saturday, I believe Saturday is free. Shall we say Saturday, Cutbill—eight for half-past ? Now, don't fail us. We shall have a few people in the evening, so make no other engagement. By-by."

Cutbill muttered out his acceptance, and retired, half delighted with his success, and half distrustful as to whether he had done what he had come to do, or whether, in not approaching the subject, he had not earned a stronger claim to the possession of that "tact" which his lordship had so much admired in him.

"I'm sure he's an old fox ; but he's wonderfully agreeable," muttered he, as he descended the stairs. It was only as he turned into the Piazza di Spagna, and saw L'Estrange standing looking in at a print-shop, that he remembered how he had left the curate to wait for him, while he made his visit.

"I'm afraid, from your look," said L'Estrange, "that you have no very good news for me. Am I right ?"

"Well," said the other, in some confusion, "I won't say that I have anything one could call exactly reassuring to tell."

"Did he suffer you to go into the question fully ? Did he show a disposition to treat the matter with any consideration ?"

Cutbill shook his head. The consciousness that he had done nothing, had not even broached the subject for which his visit was ostensibly made, overwhelmed him with shame ; and he had not the courage to avow how he had neglected the trust committed to him.

"Don't mince matters with me, for the sake of sparing me," continued L'Estrange. "I never closed my eyes last night, thinking over it all ; and you can't lower me in my own esteem below what I now feel. Out with it, then, and let me hear the worst, if I must hear it."

"You must have a little patience. Things are not always so bad as they

look... I'm to have another interview; and though I won't go so far as to bid you hope, I'd be sorry to say despair. I'm to see him again on Saturday."

"Two more days and nights of anxiety and waiting! But I suppose I deserve it all, and worse. It was in a spirit of 'greed'—ay, of gambling—that I made this venture; and if the punishment could fall on myself alone, I deserve it all."

"Come, come, don't take on in that fashion; never say die. When do the Bramleighs arrive?—don't you expect them this week?"

"They promised to eat their Christmas dinner with us; but shall we have one to give them? You know, I suppose, how matters have gone at Albano? The church patrons have quarrelled, and each has withdrawn his name. No: Mrs. Trumper remains, and she has drawn out a new code of her own—a thirty-nine articles of her own devising, which I must subscribe, or forfeit her support. The great feature of it all is, that the Bible is never to be quoted except to disprove it; so that what a man lacks in scholarship, he may make up in scepticism."

"And do you take to that?"

"Not exactly; and in consequence I have resigned my chaplaincy, and this morning I received a notice to vacate my house by the last day of the year, and go—I don't think it was suggested where to in particular—but here comes my sister—let us talk of something else."

"Oh, George," cried she, "I have got you such a nice warm coat for your visiting in the cold weather. Will you promise me to wear it, though you will look like a bear? How d'ye-do, Mr. Cutbill?"

"I'm bobbish, miss, thank you. And you?"

"I don't exactly know if I'm bobbish, but I'm certainly in good spirits, for I have heard from some very dear friends, who are on their way to see and spend the Christmas with us."

L'Estrange turned a sudden glance on Cutbill. It was a mere glance, but it said more than words, and was so inexpressibly sad besides, that the other muttered a hurried good-by and left them.

CHAPTER XLII.

A LONG TÂTE-À-TÂTE.

PRAONTAL and Longworth sat at breakfast at Freytag's Hotel at Rome. They were splendidly lodged, and the table was spread with all the luxury and abundance which are usually displayed where well-paying guests are treated by wise innkeepers. Fruit and flowers decorated the board, arranged as a painter's eye might have suggested, and nothing was wanting that could gratify the sense of sight or tempt the palate.

"After all," said Longworth, "your song-writer blundered when he wrote '*l'amour*.' It is *l'argent* that 'makes the world go round.' Look at that table, and say what sunshine the morning breaks with when one doesn't fret about the bill."

" You are right, O Philip," said the other. " Let people say what they may, men love those who spend money. See what a popularity follows the Empire in France, and what is its chief claim? Just what you said a moment back. It never frets about the bill. Contrast the splendour of such a Government with the mean mercantile spirit of your British Parliament, higgling over contracts and cutting down clerks' salaries, as though the nation were glorified when its servants wore broken boots and patched pantaloons."

" The world needs spendthrifts as it needs tornadoes. The whirlwind purifies even as it devastates."

" How grand you are at an aphorism, Philip. You have all the pomp of the pulpit when you deliver a mere platitude."

" To a Frenchman, everything is a platitude that is not a paradox."

" Go on, your vein is wonderful this morning."

" A Frenchman is the travestie of human nature; every sentiment of his is the parody of what it ought to be. He is grave over trifles, and evokes mirth out of the deepest melancholy; he takes sweet wine with his oysters, and when the post has brought him letters that may actually decide his destiny, he throws them aside to read a critique on the last ballet, or revive his recollections of its delight by gazing on a coloured print of the ballerina."

" I'm getting tired of the Gitana," said Pracontal, throwing the picture from him; " hand me the chocolate. As to the letters, I have kept them for you to read, for although I know your sputtering, splashing, hissing language for all purposes of talk, its law jargon is quite beyond me."

" Your lawyer—so far as I have seen—is most careful in his avoidance of technicals with you; he writes clearly and succinctly."

" Break open that great packet, and tell me about its clear and distinct contents."

" I said succinct, not distinct, O man of many mistakes. This is from Kelson himself, and contains an enclosure." He broke the seal as he spoke, and read,—

" DEAR SIR,—I AM exceedingly distressed to be obliged to inform you that the arrangement which, in my last letter, I had understood to be finally and satisfactorily concluded between myself, on your part, and Mr. Sedley, of Furnival's Inn, on the part of Mr. Bramleigh, is now rescinded and broken, Mr. Bramleigh having entered a formal protest, denying all concurrence or approval, and in evidence of his dissent has actually given notice of action against his solicitor, for unauthorized procedure. The bills therefore drawn by you I herewith return as no longer negotiable. I am forced to express not only my surprise, but my indignation, at the mode in which we have been treated in this transaction. Awaiting your instructions as to what step you will deem it advisable to take next,

" I am, dear sir, your obedient servant,

" J. KELSON."

"This is a bad affair," said Longworth. "That twenty thousand that you thought to have lived on for two years, astonishing the vulgar world, like some Count of Monte Christo, has proved a dissolving view, and there you sit a candidate for one of the Pope's prisons, which, if accounts speak truly, are about the vilest dens of squalor and misery in Europe."

"Put a lump of ice in my glass, and fill it up with champagne. It was only yesterday I was thinking whether I'd not have myself christened Esau, and it is such a relief to me now to feel that I need not. Monsieur Le Comte Pracontal de Bramleigh, I have the honour to drink your health." As he spoke he drained his glass, and held it out to be refilled.

"No; I'll give you no more wine. You'll need all the calm and consideration you can command to answer this letter, which requires prompt reply. And as to Esau, my friend, the parallel scarcely holds, for when he negotiated the sale of his reversion he was next of kin beyond dispute."

"I wonder what would become of you if you could not cavil. I never knew any man so fond of a contradiction."

"Be just, and admit that you give me some splendid opportunities. No, I'll not let you have more wine. Kelson's letter must be answered, and we must think seriously over what is to be done."

"Ma foi! there is nothing to be done. Mr. Bramleigh challenges me to a duel, because he knows I have no arms. He appeals to the law, which is the very costliest of all the costly things in your dear country. If you could persuade him to believe that this is not fair—not even generous—perhaps he would have the good manners to quit the premises and send me the key. Short of that, I see nothing to be done."

"I have told you already, and I tell you once more, if Kelson is of opinion that your case is good enough to go to trial, you shall not want funds to meet law expenses."

"He has told me so, over and over. He has said he shall try the case by—what is it you call it?"

"I know what you mean; he will proceed by ejectment to try title."

"This need not cost very heavily, and will serve to open the campaign. He will put me on 'the table,' as he calls it, and I shall be interrogated, and worried, and tormented,—perhaps, too, insulted, at times; and I am to keep my temper, resent nothing—not even when they impugn my honour or my truthfulness—for that there are two grand principles of British law: one is, no man need say any ill of himself, nor is he ever to mind what ill another may say of him."

"Did he tell you that?" said Longworth, laughing.

"Not exactly in these words, but it amounted to the same. Do give me a little wine; I am hoarse with talking."

"Not a drop. Tell me now, where are these letters, and that journal of your grandfather's that you showed me?"

"Kelson has them all. Kelson has everything. When I believed the affair to be ended, I told him he might do what he pleased with them, if he only restored to me that coloured sketch of my beautiful grandmother."

"There, there! don't get emotional, or I have done with you. I will write to Kelson to-day. Leave all to us and don't meddle in any way."

"That you may rely upon with confidence. No one ever yet accused me of occupying myself with anything I could possibly avoid. Do you want me any more?"

"I don't think so; but why do you ask? Where are you going?"

"I have a rendezvous this morning. I am to be three miles from this at one o'clock. I am to be at the tomb of Cecilia Metella, to meet the Lady Augusta Bramleigh, with a large party, on horseback, and we are to go somewhere and see something, and to dine, ma foi—I forget where."

"I think, all things considered," said Longworth, gravely, "I would advise some reserve as to intimacy with that family."

"You distrust my discretion. You imagine that in my unguarded freedom of talking I shall say many things which had been better unsaid; isn't that so?"

"Perhaps I do; at all events, I know the situation is one that would be intolerable to myself."

"Not to *me* though, not to *me*. It is the very difficulty, the tension, so to say, that makes it enticing. I have I cannot tell you what enjoyment in a position where, by the slightest movement to this side or that, you lose your balance and fall. I like—I delight in the narrow path with the precipice at each hand, where a step is destruction. The wish to live is never so strong as when life is in danger."

"You are a heart and soul gambler."

"Confess, however, I am 'beau joueur.' I know how to lose." And muttering something over the lateness of the hour, he snatched up his hat and hurried away.

As Pracontal was hurrying to the place of meeting with all the speed of his horse, a servant met him with a note from Lady Augusta. "She did not feel well enough," she said, "for a ride; she had a headache, and begged he would come and pay her a visit, and dine too, if he was not afraid of a dinner en tête-à-tête."

Overjoyed with the familiar tone of this note, he hurried back to Rome, and soon found himself in the little drawing-room which looked out upon the Borghese garden, and where a servant told him her ladyship would soon appear.

"This was very kind of you, very nice," said she, entering and giving him her hand in a languid sort of manner, "to come here and give up the delight of the picnic, with its pretty women and champagne, and pâtés-aux-truffes. No; you are to sit yonder. I don't know you long enough to advance you to the privilege of that low chair next my sofa."

"I am your slave, even to martyrdom," said he, bowing, and sitting down where she had bid him.

"You are aware, I hope," said she, in the same wearied tone, "that it is very wrong of us to become acquainted. That, connected as I am with the Bramleighs, I ought not to have permitted you to be presented to me.

My sister is shocked at the impropriety, and as for Lord and Lady Culduff, rather than meet you at dinner on Friday they have left Rome."

"Left Rome?"

"Yes, gone to Naples. To be sure, he ought to have been there a month ago; he was accredited to that Court, and he had nothing to do here, which was, however, to *him* an excellent reason for being here. Why do you make me talk so much? it sets my head splitting, and I sent for you to listen to you, and not to have any worry of talking myself—there, begin."

"What shall I talk about?"

"Anything you like, only not politics, or religion, or literature, or fine arts—people are so unnatural when they discuss these; nor—not society and gossip, for then they grow spiteful and ill-natured; nor about myself, for then you'd fancy you were in love with me, and I'd have to shut the door against you. Oh, how my head aches! Give me that fiacon, pray; there now go back to your place."

"Shall I read to you?"

"No: there's nothing I detest so much as being read to. One never follows the book; it is the tone and accent of the reader, something in his voice, something one fancies an affectation attracts attention, and you remark how his hair is parted, or how his boots are made. Oh, why will you torment me this way—I don't want to talk and you persist in asking me questions."

"If you had not a headache I'd sing for you."

"No, I'll not let you sing to me alone; that would be quite wrong. Remember, monsieur, and when I say remember, I mean never forget, I am excessively prude; not of that school of prudery that repels, but of that higher tone which declares a freedom impossible. Do you comprehend?"

"Perfectly, madame," said he, bowing with an air of an ideal reverence.

"Now, then, that we have settled the preliminaries of our—oh, dear!" burst she out, "see what it is to be speaking French! I had almost said of 'our friendship.'"

"And why not, madame? Can you possibly entertain a doubt of that sentiment, at once devoted and respectful, which has brought me to your feet?"

"I never do doubt about anything that I want to believe; at least till I change my mind on it, for I am—yes, I am very capricious. I am charmed with you to-day; but do not be surprised if my servant shuts the door against you to-morrow."

"Madame, you drive me to the brink of despair."

"I'm sure of that," said she, laughing. "I have driven several that far; but, strange to say, I never knew one who went over."

"Do not push torture to insufferance, madame," cried he, theatrically; but, instead of laughing at him, she looked really alarmed at his words.

"Oh, Monsieur Pracontal," cried she, suddenly, "was that little song you sung last night your own? I mean, words and music both?"

He bowed with an air of modesty.

"What a nice talent, to be able to compose and write verses too! But they tell me you are horribly satirical; that you make rhymes on people impromptu, and sing them in the very room with them."

"Only, madame, when they are, what you call in English, bores."

"But I like bores, they are so nice and dull. Do you know, Monsieur Pracontal, if it were not for bores, we English would have no distinctive nationality? Our bores are essentially our own, and unlike all the other species of the creature elsewhere."

"I respect them, and I bow to their superiority."

"It was very kind, very nice of you, to give up your ride over the Campagna, and come here to sit with me in one of my dull moods, for to-day I am very dull and dispirited. I have an odious headache, and my sister has been scolding me, and I have had such unpleasant letters. Altogether, it is a dark day with me."

"I am inexpressibly grieved."

"Of course you are; and so I told my sister you would be, when she said it was a great imprudence on my part to admit you. Not that I don't agree with her in great part, but I do detest being dictated to; isn't it insupportable?"

"Quite so; the very worst form of slavery."

"It's true you want to take away the Bramleigh estates; but, as I said to my sister, does not every one wish to win when he plays a game, and do you detest your adversary for so natural a desire? I suppose if you have a trump more than the Bramleighs you'll carry off the stakes."

"Ah, madame, how glad would I be to lay my cards on the table, if I could be sure of such an opponent as yourself."

"Yes, I *am* generous. It's the one thing I can say for myself. I'm all for fighting the battle of life honourably and courteously, though I must say one is sure to lose where the others are not equally high-minded. Now I put it to yourself, M. Pracontal, and I ask, Was it fair, was it honest, was it decent of Colonel Bramleigh, knowing the insecure title by which he held his estate, to make me his wife? You know, of course, the difference of rank that separated us; you know who I was—I can't say am, because my family have never forgiven me the mésalliance; therefore, I say, was it not atrocious in him to make a settlement which he felt must be a mockery?"

"Perhaps, madame, he may have regarded our pretensions as of little moment; indeed, I believe he treated my father's demands with much hauteur."

"Still he knew there was a claim, and a claimant, when he married *me*; and this can neither be denied nor defended."

"Ah, madam!" sighed he, "who would be stopped by scruples in such a cause?"

"No, no, there was nothing of love in it; he wanted rank, he wanted high connections. He was fond of me after his fashion, I've no doubt, but he was far more proud than fond. I often fancied he must have had

something on his mind, he would be so abstracted at times and so depressed, and then he would seem as if he wanted to tell me something but had not the courage for it, and I set it down to something quite different. I thought—no matter what I thought—but it gave me no uneasiness, for, of course, I never dreamed of being jealous; but that it should be so bad as this never occurred to me—never!"

"I am only surprised that Colonel Bramleigh never thought it worth his while to treat with my father, who, all things considered, would have been easily dealt with; he was always a pauvre diable, out of one scrape to fall into another; so reckless that the very smallest help ever seemed to him quite sufficient to brave life with."

"I know nothing of the story, tell it to me."

"It is very long, it is very tiresome, it is encumbered with details of dates and eras. I doubt you'd have patience for it, but if you think you wculd, I'm ready."

"Begin then, only don't make it more confused, more tangled, than you can help; and give me no dates—I hate dates."

Pracontal was silent for a moment or two as if reflecting; and then, drawing his chair a little nearer to her sofa, he leaned his forehead on his hand, and in a low, but distinct voice, began:—

"When Colonel Bramleigh's father was yet a young man, a matter of business required his presence in Ireland; he came to see a very splendid mansion then being built by a rich nobleman, on which his house had advanced a large sum by way of mortgage."

"Mon cher M. Pracontal, must we begin so far back? It is like the Plaideur in Molière who commences, 'Quand je vois le soleil, quand je vois la lune.'"

"Very true, but I must begin at the beginning of all things, and, with a little patience, I'll soon get on further. Mr. Montagu Bramleigh made acquaintance in Ireland with a certain Italian painter called Giacomo Lami, who had been brought over from Rome to paint the frescoes of this great house. This Lami—very poor, and very humble, ignoble if you like to say so—had a daughter of surpassing beauty. She was so very lovely that Giacomo was accustomed to introduce her into almost all his frescoes, for she had such variety of expression, so many 'reflets,' as one may say, of character in her look, that she was a Madonna here, a Flora there, now a Magdalene, now a Dido; but you need not take my word for it, here she is as a Danaë." And he opened his watch-case as he spoke, and displayed a small miniature in enamel of marvellous beauty and captivation.

"Oh, was she really like this?"

"That was copied from a picture of her at St. Servain, when she was eighteen, immediately before she accompanied her father to Ireland; and in Giacomo's sketch-book, which I hope one of these days to have the honour of showing to you, there is a memorandum saying that this portrait of Enrichetta was the best likeness of her he had ever made."

He had a younger daughter called Carlotta, also handsome, but vastly inferior in beauty to my grandmother."

" Your grandmother ? "

" Forgive me, madame, if I have anticipated ; but Enrichetta Lami became the wife of Montagu Bramleigh. The young man, captivated by her marvellous beauty, and enchanted by a winning grace of manner, in which it appears she excelled, made his court to her and married her. The ceremony of marriage presented no difficulty, as Lami was a member of some sect of Waldensean Protestants, who claim a sort of affinity with the Anglican Church, and they were married in the parish church by the minister, and duly registered in the registry-book of the parish. All these matters are detailed in this book of Giacomo Lami's, which was at once account-book and sketch-book and journal, and, indeed, family history. It is a volume will, I am sure, amuse you, for, amongst sketches and studies for pictures, there are the drollest little details of domestic events, with passing notices of the political circumstances of the time—for old Giacomo was a conspirator and a Carbonaro, and heaven knows what else. He even involved himself in the Irish troubles, and was so far compromised that he was obliged to fly the country and get over to Holland, which he did, taking his two daughters with him. It has never been clearly ascertained whether Montagu Bramleigh had quarrelled with his wife or consented to her accompanying her father, for, while there were letters from him to her full of affection and regard, there are some strange passages in Giacomo's diary that seem to hint at estrangement and coldness. When her child, my father, was born, she pressed Bramleigh strongly to come over to the christening ; but, though he promised at first, and appeared overjoyed at the birth of his heir, he made repeated pretexts of this or that engagement, and ended by not coming. Old Lami must have given way to some outburst of anger at this neglect and desertion, for he sent back Bramleigh's letters unopened ; and the poor Enrichetta, after struggling bravely for several months under this heartless and cruel treatment, sunk and died. The old man wandered away towards the south of Europe after this, taking with him his grandchild and his remaining daughter ; and the first entry we find in his diary is about three years later, where we read, 'Chambéry.—Must leave this, where I thought I had at last found a home. Niccolo Baldassare is bent on gaining Carlotta's affections. Were they to marry it would be the ruin of both. Each has the same faults as the other.'

" And later on,—

" Had an explanation with N. B., who declares that, with or without my consent, he will make C. his wife. I have threatened to bring him before the Council ; but he defies me, and says he is ready to abandon the society rather than give her up. I must quit this secretly and promptly.'

" We next find him at Treviso, where he was painting the Basilicata of St. Guedelie, and here he speaks of himself as a lonely old man,

deserted and forsaken, showing that his daughter had left him some time before. He alludes to offers that had been made him to go to England ; but declares that nothing would induce him to set foot in that country more. One passage would imply that Carlotta, on leaving home, took her sister's boy with her, for in the old man's writing there are these words,—

“ ‘ I do not want to hear more of them ; but I would wish tidings of the boy. I have dreamed of him twice.’ ”

“ From that time forth the journal merely records the places he stopped at, the works he was engaged in, and the sums he received in payment. For the most part, his last labours were in out-of-the-way, obscure spots, where he worked for mere subsistence ; and of how long he lived there, and where he died, there is no trace.

“ Do I weary you, my dear lady, with these small details of very humble people, or do you really bestow any interest on my story ? ”

“ I like it of all things. I only want to follow Carlotta’s history now, and learn what became of her.”

“ Of her fate and fortune I know nothing. Indeed, all that I have been telling you heretofore I have gleaned from that book and some old letters of my great-grandfather’s. My own history I will not inflict upon you—at least not now. I was a student of the Naval College of Genoa till I was fourteen, and called Anatole Pracontal, ‘ dit ’ Lami ; but who had entered me on the books of the college, who paid for me or interested himself about me, I never knew.

“ A boyish scrape I fell into induced me to run away from the college. I took refuge in a small felucca, which landed me at Algiers, where I entered the French service, and made two campaigns with Pélissier ; and only quitted the army on learning that my father had been lost at sea, and had bequeathed me some small property, then in the hands of a banker at Naples.

“ The property was next to nothing, but by the papers and letters that I found, I learned who I was, and to what station and fortune I had legitimate claim. It seems a small foundation, perhaps, to build upon ; but remember how few the steps are in reality, and how direct besides. My grandmother, Enrichetta, was the married wife of Montagu Bramleigh ; her son—Godfrey Lami at his birth, but afterwards known by many aliases—married my mother, Marie de Pracontal, at Aix, in Savoy, where I was born, the name Pracontal being given me. My father’s correspondence with the Bramleighs was kept up at intervals during his life, and frequent mention is made in diaries, as well as the banker’s books, of sums of money received by him from them. In Bolton’s hands, also, was deposited my father’s will, where he speaks of me and the claim which I should inherit on the Bramleigh estates ; and he earnestly entreats Bolton, who had so often befriended him, to succour his poor boy, and not leave him without help and counsel in the difficulties that were before him.

“ Have you followed, or can you follow, the tangled scheme ? ” cried

he, after a pause ; "for you are either very patient or completely exhausted—which is it ?"

"But why have you taken the name of Pracontal, and not your real name, Bramleigh ?" asked she, eagerly.

"By Bolton's advice, in the first instance, he wisely taking into account how rich the family were whose right I was about to question, and how poor I was. Bolton inclined to a compromise, and, indeed, he never ceased to press upon me that it would be the fairest and most generous of all arrangements ; but that to effect this, I must not shock the sensibilities of the Bramleighs by assuming their name—that to do so was to declare war at once."

"And yet, had you called yourself Bramleigh, you would have warned others that the right of the Bramleighs to this estate was at least disputed."

Pracontal could scarcely repress a smile at a declaration so manifestly prompted by selfish considerations ; but he made no reply.

"Well, and this compromise, do they agree to it ?" asked she, hastily.

"Some weeks ago, I believed it was all concluded ; but this very morning my lawyer's letter tells me that Augustus Bramleigh will not hear of it, that he is indignant at the very idea, and that the law alone must decide between us."

"What a scandal !"

"So I thought. Worse, of course, for them, who are in the world and well known. I am a nobody."

"A nobody, who might be somebody to-morrow," said she, slowly and deliberately.

"After all, the stage of pretension is anything but pleasant, and I cannot but regret that we have not come to some arrangement."

"Can I be of use ? Could my services be employed to any advantage ?"

"At a moment, I cannot answer ; but I am very grateful for even the thought."

"I cannot pretend to any influence with the family. Indeed, none of them ever liked me ; but they might listen to me, and they might also believe that my interests went with their own. Would you like to meet Augustus Bramleigh ?"

"There is nothing I desire so much."

"I'll not promise he'll come ; but if he should consent, will you come here on Tuesday morning—say, at eleven o'clock—and meet him ? I know he's expected at Albano by Sunday, and I'll have a letter to propose the meeting, in his hands, on his arrival."

"I have no words to speak my gratitude to you."

Surnames in England and Wales.

IT IS now thirty years ago that the Act of Parliament which provided for a general registration of births, deaths, and marriages in England and Wales first came into operation. During the period which has elapsed since then, about thirty-nine millions of names have been recorded, in pursuance of the enactment, and indexes of these names have been regularly framed, and carefully preserved, at the central Register Office in London.

In this manner evidence has been amassed relative to the family nomenclature of the country, such as has never been collected by any other process. It is highly improbable that there is a single surname amongst us at the present time which has not, in one place or another, appeared on the lists to which we refer. And the number and variety of the titles thus assembled together are equally astonishing. With regard to the former, it was shown by the Registrar-General, in a calculation based upon these indexes, which appeared in his annual report for 1853, that there are in England and Wales between *thirty-five* and *forty thousand* family surnames. In this computation, however, those appellations which varied in spelling in any degree whatever were dealt with as separate names, notwithstanding an undoubted or probable community of derivation. A considerable deduction from the above figures should therefore, as the Registrar-General justly observed, be made, if such denominations as *Smith* and *Smythe*, *Davis* and *Davies*, *Clark* and *Clarke* are to be regarded as identical; and the necessity for such a deduction will become additionally apparent when we show, as we shall presently have occasion to do, that in some instances the varieties of spelling applied to a single appellation are extremely numerous. But after due allowance is made for this fictitious multiplication of surnames, the remaining total of distinct varieties will undoubtedly be very large. Thirty thousand has been mentioned as a safe approximation to the number. With respect to the wide range of objects and notions from which these family names have been drawn, a single glance at the indexes is sufficient to convince us. We soon discover, indeed, that a few leading sources have furnished far larger numbers of individuals with titles than the various other sources have done. But strangely diverse and extensive are those facts and circumstances from which the remaining and less common surnames have been supplied. The entire animated creation; the vegetable and mineral worlds; the different relationships of social and domestic life; offices and virtues; habits, actions, and emotions—all have lent their numerous terms to meet the

exigencies of family distinction. Nor have we been content to borrow such names only as relate to the conditions and surroundings of our earthly existence. The supernatural has been drawn upon as well as the natural. There are Angels, Souls, Spirits, Ghosts, and Fairies in our midst; and we have ventured to appropriate to the purposes of our nomenclature even such titles as those of Death and Hell, Eden and Paradise. It is true, as we shall hereafter see, that in many cases the etymologists require us to withdraw from the various categories above indicated not a few names which, from the manner of their spelling at the present time, would seem properly to take their places in these different lists. But, after all, such withdrawals involve nothing more than a transference of certain appellations from one class to another; and probably the corrections of etymology do not on the whole materially narrow the wide area over which, on a first view of the registration indexes, our family nomenclature appears to extend.

We may perhaps be enabled the more satisfactorily to notice some of those facts relative to our surnames on which the registration system has thrown light, if, in the first place, we briefly consider the purely historical portion of our subject.

It will be remembered then, that in primitive and scanty communities men neither received nor required more than a single name a piece. There is no reason to suppose that this name ever consisted of a word arbitrarily chosen, and conferred without object as a mere appellative. It expressed either some fact relative to the birth or personal appearance of the newly-born child, or—perhaps more commonly—some aspiration as to the infant's future character or career on the part of the parents. Such names as were originated in the latter manner would naturally enough be closely associated with the religious belief of those who chose them.

The mythology of the ancient Teutons and their nomenclature were intimately connected. The deities whom they dreaded and worshipped, and the heroic qualities which they attributed to those deities, supplied a large proportion of their personal titles. Their simple root names, however, were soon to a great extent merged in combinations; although amongst our monosyllabic surnames at the present time some are to be found which are held to have come down to us unaltered from the highest Teutonic antiquity. The combinations adopted were frequently suitable and suggestive. But this cannot be said of all, or even of most of them. In the course of time names were conjoined with but little regard to appropriateness, being evidently the titles of different heroes, who had been invested with appellations denoting various and sometimes incongruous qualities. So that at an early period the influence of actual persons upon the nomenclature of our progenitors began to assert its superiority over that of regard for titular propriety; in other words, the power of human association soon superseded the love of verbal consistency. It is interesting to note in the Teutonic names the prominent homage paid to work and will, to the virtues of firmness and determination; and while we contrast

these titles with the more highly romantic and poetical denominations of the Kelt, we cannot fail to recognize in the two classes of names the early manifestation of those diverse qualities which have appropriated to the races their widely different *rôles* in the drama of history.

But the single personal name was sufficient only under the most primitive conditions of human life. Growing numbers rendered the frequent repetition of similar titles unavoidable, and further methods of distinction became necessary. In common with most other races, the Anglo-Saxons resorted to two or three simple means for meeting the necessity. Men came to be called the *sons of their fathers*, while personal peculiarities originated nicknames which also sometimes served to distinguish individuals. The situation of a man's residence, or his occupation, moreover, frequently supplied a description of him which answered, to a certain extent, as an additional name. There must have been, however, in the generality of cases, a great deal of uncertainty attendant upon the use of these modes of distinction. And even in those instances in which the second title, from being constantly applied, answered most of the ends of a modern surname, it related to the individual only, and involved nothing like a system of *family nomenclature*. "Although it is certain," says Mr. Sharon Turner,* "that such additional appellations were occasionally used by the Anglo-Saxons, yet they appear to have been but personal distinctions, and not to have been appropriated by them as family names in the manner of surnames with us."

The first movement towards distinctive family titles seems, indeed, to have been made in a different direction, and to have consisted, not in the adoption of a second name at all, but in the modification of the personal or fore-name. A prefix was selected, which was made common to the appellations of all the members of a family; and with this prefix the different and distinguishing terminations were compounded. *Aethel-*, *Æd-*, and *Ælf-*, were prefixes of this description; and these, with many other similar ones, were employed in a great variety of combinations. This system, however, was but rarely employed, and was not even perfectly carried out by those who in a measure adopted it.

The year 1000 has been mentioned as the probable period at which surnames—in the present acceptation of the word—were first regularly employed. To the Normans belongs the credit of having instituted them; and they may be said to have been formally introduced into this country at the Conquest. It appears, however, on good evidence that they were not wholly unknown here prior to that event.

The feudal system naturally tended to create surnames out of landed possessions, and at the same time to limit their use to the upper classes. For a long time, therefore, they were the privileged titles of the few, and not the means of family distinction employed by the people in general. It may be said that five centuries elapsed from the date of their importa-

* *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, vol. iii. p. 10.

tion to that of their general adoption throughout the country—during which interval they were but slowly spreading downwards through society. It is difficult now to follow closely the gradual process by which the ancient forms of designation became as it were crystallized into the consistency of permanent and hereditary surnames; but it is certain that a large proportion of our family titles of to-day are substantially identical with the mere descriptive terms used to distinguish individuals, from the early years of Anglo-Saxon history downwards. Thus it has happened that names representing mere personal caprice and popular fancy have taken their places amongst those originated in more regular ways, and that the patronymics, the titles derived from lands, from situation of residences, from trades and qualities, have been handed down to us amidst a heterogeneous multitude of other appellations, which, as we have seen, are surprising from their variety, and often perplexing from their extreme oddness. The process by which the ancient personal names of pre-Norman times have been perpetuated in the form of surnames demands a moment's separate consideration. It was probably a not uncommon practice, among such of the Anglo-Saxon race as were enabled by their energy of character to obtain their deliverance from serfdom under Norman rule, and to regain something of the social position which they had lost at the Conquest, to recur, in choosing their family name, to the honoured title of some ancestor of their own. Had it not been for this loving adoption of ancestral names, we should probably find amongst those of our family denominations which follow the patronymic form scarcely anything of a Saxon character; for by the time that surnames were beginning to come into general use the old Saxon baptismal appellations had mostly given way to the Johns, Jameses, Thomases, Williams, and Roberts of Norman introduction.*

The period of five hundred years which we have mentioned above brings us down to the time of the Reformation; and this is the era at which family nomenclature in England appears to have arrived at something like definiteness. The institution of parish registers—which were ordered to be kept in lieu of the monkish records, on the suppression of the monasteries by Henry VIII.—is considered to have been mainly instrumental in producing this result. Although, however, the time we allude to may justly be mentioned as associated with a *general* uniformity of method as to surnames, it should not be forgotten that in some parts of the country uncertainty continued to prevail to a much later date.

It may perhaps be not uninteresting to the reader if we now consider some of the most common English surnames, with the view of understanding the causes to which their frequent occurrence amongst us is attributable.

In the annual report of the Registrar-General above referred to—that for 1858—an interesting table on this subject, based upon the information

* See Lowm's *Patronymica Britannica*. Preliminary Dissertation, p. 16.

furnished by the registration indexes, was inserted. This table presented a list of the fifty most ordinary family titles of England and Wales, giving the numbers of persons registered under each title within a certain specified period. We will here insert the names in the order which they were found to assume. First on the list, as would be expected, came Smith. Then followed Jones (2), Williams (3), Taylor (4), Davies (5), Brown (6), Thomas (7), Evans (8), Roberts (9), Johnson (10), Robinson (11), Wilson (12), Wright (13), Wood (14), Hall (15), Walker (16), Hughes (17), Green (18), Lewis (19), Edwards (20), Thompson (21), White (22), Jackson (23), Turner (24), Hill (25), Harris (26), Clark (27), Cooper (28), Harrison (29), Davis (30), Ward (31), Baker (32), Martin (33), Morris (34), James (35), Morgan (36), King (37), Allen (38), Clarke (39), Cook (40), Moore (41), Parker (42), Price (43), Phillips (44), Watson (45), Shaw (46), Lee (47), Bennett (48), Carter (49), and Griffiths (50).

Our limits being necessarily narrow, we will confine our remarks to one-half of the above titles; and in order, first, to give some notion as to the proportion which the owners of the names from No. 1 to No. 25 inclusive bear to the population of the country, we will here insert the numbers of births registered under each of those appellations during 1865—the latest year for which the registration indexes have at present been completely prepared—adding the total of births recorded in England and Wales during the same time. It will be seen that we place the *names* in the sequence assigned to them by the Registrar-General upon the warrant of his own more extended observations, although the period of one year is insufficient to arrange the numbers in their precisely corresponding order. The titles and their figures stand thus:—

| Order. | Name. | No. of Births in 1865. | Order. | Name. | No. of Births in 1865. |
|--------|----------|---------------------------|--------|----------|---------------------------|
| 1. | Smith | 10,505 | 14. | Wood | 2,589 |
| 2. | Jones | 9,619 | 15. | Hall | 2,495 |
| 3. | Williams | 6,198 | 16. | Walker | 2,359 |
| 4. | Taylor | 5,033 | 17. | Hughes | 2,374 |
| 5. | Davies | 4,547 | 18. | Green | 2,360 |
| 6. | Brown | 4,416 | 19. | Lewis | 2,275 |
| 7. | Thomas | 3,612 | 20. | Edwards | 2,323 |
| 8. | Evans | 3,796 | 21. | Thompson | 2,411 |
| 9. | Roberts | 3,191 | 22. | White | 2,441 |
| 10. | Johnson | 2,830 | 23. | Jackson | 2,325 |
| 11. | Robinson | 2,768 | 24. | Turner | 2,372 |
| 12. | Wilson | 2,826 | 25. | Hill | 2,146 |
| 13. | Wright | 2,523 | | | |

- The various families then bearing the above twenty-five titles contributed to the population of England and Wales during the year 1865, no less than 90,284 infants. The total number of births registered in the same space of time was 748,069; and thus nearly an eighth part of the babyhood belonging to the year was included under the foregoing names. The question naturally arises, what circumstances have given to these

particular titles so great a frequency ? We shall endeavour to meet the inquiry, and for that purpose will consider the names in order.

The predominance of *Smith* as an English surname can only be accounted for by the former extremely wide application of the term which originated the title. The smith of the middle ages represented a vast number of the most ordinary mechanical needs of the people, and he was everywhere. No other handicraft was at the same time so indispensable and so inclusive as his ; none, accordingly, employed so many individuals ; and by consequence none has left so wide an impression upon our nomenclature. An inquiry into the causes which may have operated to secure to certain men the titles of their occupations in preference to names of other classes would not be without interest. It has been remarked that the selection of particular surnames in the first instance was, for the most part, an arbitrary matter ; and that the men who received their titles from their trades were just as likely to have been named after their fathers, or from the situation of their residences. But we venture to think that much may reasonably be urged against this proposition. Let us suppose that two men, residing within a short distance of each other, are similarly engaged as smiths. One—like the “mighty man” of Longfellow—is a person of energetic devotion to his craft, of much physical strength, and of forcible moral character ; while the other follows from mere habit and necessity, and in a tame and spiritless manner, the trade taught him in his youth. Can there be any doubt which of the two will be the more likely to be named after his occupation ? The first is *the smith par excellence* ; when choosing for him a distinctive title his neighbours forget in his strong personality the surroundings of his home and the name of his father, and call him by the title of that useful work with which his diligence and skill identify him. Not so the second. Whatever causes may operate to provide him with an appellation, they will in all probability be quite apart from his handicraft, which by lack of zeal and spirit he fails to assimilate to himself. We cannot help thinking then that the names denoting occupations must have pointed, in a very large number of cases, to individual energy and excellence on the part of those who originally received them ; and for this reason we regard them as a highly honourable class of titles.

The names which stand second and third on our list are *Jones* and *Williams*. These introduce us to the patronymics, and are, as it is scarcely necessary to remind the reader, mainly to be found in Wales, so that if the Principality had been cut off from our calculations, they most certainly would not have appeared in our catalogue at all. Our fellow-subjects in Wales have always been far behind us in the matter of personal and family nomenclature. When, after long delay, they at last adopted our system of surnames in substitution for a cumbersome denominational method of their own, they seem to have selected and adhered to the simplest of all our classes of appellations almost, to the exclusion of the rest. We find them now complying with the fashions of modern nomen-

clature (but in a very imperfect manner), by employing as surnames an extremely limited number of baptismal titles in their genitive form—the addition of the possessive *s* being their equivalent for our patronymic termination *son*. Thus Jones (*i. e.* John's) is the same name as Johnson; and Williams (William's) as Williamson. The Welsh people exhibit exactly the same lack of enterprise in their selection of *baptismal* names at the present day. Although the extreme paucity of their surnames, which must often be productive of serious inconvenience, might to some extent be compensated by variety in their Christian names, they nevertheless adhere to a few well-worn titles with remarkable tenacity; and as the registration indexes show, have recourse to a *second* baptismal name much less frequently than their English neighbours. To account, therefore, for the positions occupied by the two titles we are now considering, we have only to remember this tendency on the part of the Welsh, by reason of which the bulk of their population has been included under a very small number of surnames. That Jones should be the most prominent name of the class under our notice is easily explained, since in every country which has embraced Christianity St. John's character has always been supremely popular, and his name most frequently conferred at the baptismal font. It will be observed that the difference between the numbers relating to Jones and Williams is very considerable; a discrepancy which doubtless approximately represents the distance formerly intervening between the Christian names John and William in the popular estimation of Wales.

The patronymic or sire-name is, perhaps, the least interesting of our varieties of cognomina, since it suggests nothing directly as to the individual who first bore it. It does, indeed, disrespectfully hint that he may have been wanting in *any* striking characteristics of his own; and viewed in this light, it affords valuable corroborative evidence of the force and significance of other titles. It was probably often the means insensibly adopted to designate those who in no way specially distinguished themselves. In Wales, however, it is so universal, that on this hypothesis we should be obliged to people the Principality with nonentities; we therefore conclude that in that portion of the country it merely represents such a general preference for the simplest form of personal distinction as overrides the taste for titles of a more specific and descriptive character. This vast preponderance of the patronymic amongst the Welsh, renders their family nomenclature far less interesting than that of England.

Taylor, a surname of general distribution among the English counties, brings us back to the occupations. The importance and usefulness of the trade seem to account for the prominence of the title.

Davies, which stands fifth on our list, is another Welsh patronymic. The personal name Dawydd (David) belongs to the days of purely Celtic history, and has ever since been a characteristic national title in the Principality. Taffy is the familiar form of the word. If to the number of the *Davises* we add that of the persons who bear the somewhat differently spelt but really identical name, *Davis*, the united family will appear third

in our catalogue, taking its place between the Joneses and the Williamses, and showing that the title of the Jewish king who "sang sweet songs," must formerly have been nearly as commonly conferred in baptism as that of the favourite character of Christian story, St. John.

Brown calls our attention to a new class of names, viz. those which are derived from the physical characteristics of their first bearers. In conjunction with this appellation we may consider *White*—the only other kindred surname upon our roll—which, it will be seen, occupies the twenty-second place in the list.

It is clear that the personal traits which originated nicknames—which nicknames in many cases have been converted into permanent family titles—must have been more or less exceptional in their nature. They would otherwise never have attracted attention or provoked comment. Bearing this in mind, we should naturally expect to find that amongst a fair-haired, fair-complexioned race, such as our own, the dark and swarthy men, proportionately few in number but collectively forming no inconsiderable body, would be those whose skin would most frequently excite notice and originate a distinguishing name. Accordingly, we are not surprised to observe that the title *Brown* occupies a far more prominent position amongst us than *White*. With respect to this last-mentioned name, moreover, there appears to be a doubt whether it was in all cases originated by peculiarity of complexion at all. A Saxon word having no reference to colour, and which may frequently explain the title, not improbably sweeps off a large number of the *Whites* into an entirely different category of names from that attributable to personal characteristics. Be this, however, as it may, the *Browns* are twice as numerous as the *Whites*, even without any such reduction. Whenever the name *White* actually had reference to complexion, we may be certain that the singularity referred to was strongly marked; and the same observation may be made with regard to all titles occasioned by physical qualities of whatever kind. The class of names created in this manner is no small one. Many common appellations which belong to it will readily occur to the reader, such as *Black*, *Little*, *Long*, *Short*, *Small*, and *Strong*.

Thomas, *Evans*, and *Roberts*, Nos. 7, 8, and 9, next claim our attention. *Hughes*, *Lewis*, and *Edwards*, which occupy places in our catalogue numbered respectively, 17, 19, and 20, may also here be disposed of. All the six names are patronymics, having their head-quarters in Wales, and owing their numerical positions entirely to that monotonous taste on the subject of nomenclature which we have already noticed as characterizing the Welsh people. The relative frequency of these surnames must doubtless depend, in a great measure at least, upon the comparative favour which their representative Christian names formerly met with at the font; and it is not easy, or indeed possible, in all cases to unravel the tangled circumstances which may have rendered these different baptismal titles more or less common at the time during which surnames were coming into general use. *Evans* is the genitive of an old Welsh

name equivalent to John, and its position reasserts the wide popularity of that appellation. It may occasion some surprise that Edward, the name of the "ruthless king," the once hated conqueror of Wales, on whose banners the bard invokes "confusion," should have originated a large number of family titles in the Principality. But, as it has been observed, surnames only became settled in Wales during the last two or three centuries, when all prejudice against Saxon rule and Saxon nomenclature had had time to pass out of the Welsh mind.

Hitherto the properly English names which we have considered have been those relative only to occupations and to personal peculiarities. We now come to three genuinely English titles of the patronymic class. The ever-prominent John meets us at the outset, but with the suffix *son* by way of termination in the place of the possessive *s* of Wales. This termination is of Scandinavian origin, and its prevalence amongst us is regarded as a relic of the Danish conquests.* We may remark in passing that the name John maintains as a baptismal appellation in England exactly the same supremacy in the present day which the position of the derivative now under our notice declares it to have asserted for itself formerly. It is shown by the registration indexes to be the most common man's name in the country. Next in frequency comes William; and the ten appellations which most nearly approach these in commonness succeed them in the following order: — Thomas, James, George, Henry, Joseph, Robert, Edward, Charles, Richard, and David. Amongst these male titles, however, several female names are interspersed.

Robinson succeeds *Johnson* in the list, being nearly as common as its predecessor. The name Robert came to us with the Normans, and must soon have become popular. In common with most of the old baptismal titles, it has originated a large number of distinct surnames, in addition to its more obvious derivatives. By way of example we will here introduce a list of those family names of which, either directly or through its nicked and abbreviated forms, it is the father. We have found as many as fifty-one of these kindred titles—several of which, indeed, appear in Mr. Lower's *Patronymica Britannica* heretofore quoted. They are as under: — Bobbett, Bobbin, Bobby, Bobin, Bobkin, Dobson, Dobb, Dobbie, Dobbin, Dobbins, Dobbinson, Dobbs, Dobby, Hobb, Hobbes, Hobbins, Hobbis, Hobbs, Hobby, Hobkins, Hobkinson, Hoby, Hopkin, Hopkings, Hopkins, Hopkinson, Probert, Probry (these two last from the old Welsh *ap-Robert* and *ap-Robin*, i.e. son of Robert and son of Robin), Robson, Robarts, Robb, Robbens, Robbie, Robbins, Roberson, Robert, Robertz, Robertshall, Robertshaw, Robertson, Robeson, Rohings, Robin-sin, Robinson, Robison, Robjohn, Robjohns, Roblin, Robshaw, Robson, and Roby.

It must not be supposed that this list of derivatives is by any means exceptionally long. Several of the personal names which became common

* See *The Teutonic Name-system*. By ROBERT FERGUSON. London, 1864, p. 22.

after the Norman Conquest have laid the foundations of even larger numbers of family titles.

Of the three English patronymics which we have mentioned above, *Wilson* is the last. The two similar names *Thompson* and *Jackson* (twenty-one and twenty-three on our list) may be referred to in conjunction with it. The personal appellations here perpetuated as surnames are, as the reader will observe, in their clipped and familiar, rather than their perfect forms—so indeed also is *Robert* in the name *Robinson* already considered. From the very frequent occurrence of such abbreviations in our nomenclature we see clearly—what is, however, sufficiently evident from other sources—that surnames must generally have been colloquially conferred upon individuals by other people; and that they were not, in most cases, deliberately chosen and promulgated by those to whom they attached. The exceptions to this rule we shall presently have occasion to examine. *Jack*, we may observe, has been surmised to be *unrelated* to *John*, although the association is generally accepted. It is held by some to owe its origin to *Jacques*—*James*; but this connection, we believe, has not been satisfactorily established.

Wright (No. 18) next claims our consideration. This name, as will be perceived, belongs to the same class as *Smith* and *Taylor*. Like the former of those appellations it is derived from a word of extremely wide application. As *Smith* was formerly the general description of all artificers in metals, so was *Wright* that of all workers in wood: similar causes therefore seem to have occasioned the frequency of both names. There is another title to be examined belonging to the category of occupations. This is *Turner* (No. 24), and it is perhaps more difficult to account for the occurrence of this name in our catalogue, than for that of any other which appears there. It strikes us at once that the use of the lathe during the Middle Ages could scarcely have occupied so important a position with respect to other industries as to account for its conferring an appellation on larger numbers of persons than many of the occupations which are absent from our list. There is, however, a plausible theory which endeavours to identify the word *turner* with *tourneour*—the Norman name for one who engaged in a tournament; and if we may accept this explanation of the term, our difficulty is in a great measure dispelled. The augmentation of the *Turners* from two distinct sources, the one springing from Saxon industry, and the other from Norman chivalry, will perhaps explain the position which their numerous family occupies amongst us at the present time.

Wood, *Green*, and *Hill* stand 14th, 18th, and 25th upon our roll. There would seem to be but little difficulty in accounting for the commonness of these titles, since the three features of nature which have supplied them are abundant enough in England. It has frequently been remarked that it would be interesting to trace names of this class to the neighbourhoods in which they were bestowed, for the sake of finding there the objects which occasioned them. But it should be remembered that such titles are

not likely to have been most often conferred precisely in those districts which abounded in the natural features referred to. *John at-the-hill* would not be so named in a neighbourhood entirely consisting of hills; for in such a locality the descriptive title would scarcely be a description at all. *Will at-the-wood*, again, is a name which would not be employed where trees were abundant—as in a forest-land clearing. It is one rather which might be conferred by the villagers of an open plain upon a man whose cottage nestled amongst the sheltering leafage of some exceptionally wooded knoll. We venture to think, too, that our reasoning with regard to occupation-names is in some degree applicable to the titles of the class now before us. We imagine that the tastes and habits of certain individuals may have so associated them in their neighbours' minds with the peculiar features of the country, as to secure to them distinguishing appellations derived from those features, which others, though similarly situated, may have failed to acquire. In some cases, however, mere possession may have led to this description of surname. A quaint old writer,* referring to the names compounded with *well*—a title of the class we are considering—thus states his view of their origin:—“ Our ancestors, according to the different issue of waters, did differently terme them, and among other, that which rose bubling out of the earth they called well-water, as if they had said bubling water: but this name of well grew afterward among us to bee the name of the bourne-pit, whereout the water is drawne. *Sundry comming to possesse places which were neere unto welles of especial note, having gotten thereby the name of such or such a well, became after them so to be called. As Staniwell, of his dwelling at a well so named, of the stoniness thereof, Moswell of a well where much moose did grow.* ”

Some names of this class retain the prepositions and articles which were originally prefixed to them, and which indeed were at first necessary to their completeness. Thus we have *Athfield*, *Attaway*, *Attawell*, *Bythell* (*i.e.* by-the-hill), *Bytheway*, and *Bythesea*. In other cases the article has disappeared, while the preposition remains; as in *Atha*, *Athoe*, *Athorn*, *Athow*, *Atley*, *Atmore*, *Atridge*, *Atton*, *Attree*, *Atwater*, *Atwell*, *Atwood*, *Bycroft*, *Byfield*, *Byford*, *Bygate*, *Bygrave*, *Byham*, *Byhurst*, *Bywater*, *Byway*, and *Byus* (*i.e.* by-house). In most instances, however, the ancient prefixes have been completely dropped: while in a few names they have left behind them a single letter, as in *Nash* (*i.e.* atten-ash).

Our two remaining family titles, viz. *Hall* and *Walker* (Nos. 15 and 16), are not to be classed with any of the foregoing. With respect to the former, Mr. Lower† says:—“ The principal apartment in all old mansions was the hall, and in feudal times it was a petty court of justice, as well as the scene of entertainment. The chief servitor when the lord was resident, or the tenant when he was non-resident, would naturally acquire such a surname; and hence its frequency.”

* *VIRESTREGAN: A Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities, concerning the most Noble and Renowned English Nation.* London, 1634, p. 296.

† *Patronymica Britannica.* Article “ Hall.”

The name *Walker* does not commemorate any unusual pedestrian capabilities on the part of its original possessors. It is probably sometimes derived from a Saxon word meaning a fuller. Sometimes it points to the forest-rangers established under the hated laws which followed upon the Conquest. As in the case of *Turner*, the similarity of spelling applied to the two appellations may account for the large number of Walkers in England at the present time.

To sum up, then, the foregoing observations :—The two commonest surnames which are thoroughly English belong to the honourable class of occupation-names, and relate to the most ordinary handicrafts. These are followed, as far as England is concerned, by a name of personal appearance, the nature of which explains its frequency. Then come three personal names in patronymic shape. The remaining varieties consist of titles arising from situation of residence, and of those which owe their derivation to more than one source ; one name—*Hall*—standing by itself. Wales intrudes into the roll nine personal names in the simplest patronymic form. The commonest of these represents the most popular character in Christian history ; and the same may be said of the corresponding patronymic of England. It may here be remarked that the competition between *Smith* and *Jones* is extremely close. In some years the latter name contributes more entries to the registration indexes than the former ; and in comparing the numbers representing the two titles during a period of seventeen years, the Registrar-General has shown an excess of *Smiths* over *Joneses* amounting to only 8,187.*

It will be remembered that, in stating the probable number of different surnames in England and Wales, we made a large allowance for present varieties in the spelling of words which were in the first instance identical. A single illustration will suffice to make clear how large a multiplication of titles has taken place through this instrumentality. *Humfrey* is a good English personal name, which, like multitudes of its fellows, readily passed into a surname. It usually now appears with a final *s* suffixed, which letter, it may be observed, does not *always* indicate a patronymic, but would seem sometimes to stand as a diminutive, and sometimes as a mere phonetic addition.† With this termination, the name appears in the registration indexes under twenty-two different modes of spelling, which are as follow, viz. :—*Humfrays*, *Humfress*, *Humfreys*, *Humfries*, *Humfriys*, *Humpfries*, *Humphriess*, *Humpherus*, *Humpheryes*, *Humpherys*, *Humphires*, *Humphreis*, *Humphres*, *Humphreyes*, *Humphreys*, *Humphries*, *Humphris*, *Humphriess*, *Humphryes*, *Humphrys*, and *Humpries*. By dropping the final *s* we acquire three additional and entirely distinct varieties of the title, viz. :—*Homfray*, *Humpsey*, and *Umphrey*. Admitting that in some two or three cases these varieties may have been augmented by the individual ignorance of informants in notifying to the

* *Annual Report for 1858*, p. 22.

† See *The Teutonic Name-system*, above quoted, p. 32.

registration officers the method of spelling their names, it is perfectly clear from the constant reappearance in the indexes of most of the above forms that the great majority of them are recognized as distinct family titles, and are carefully transmitted from generation to generation. The differences here manifestly arise from the etymological uncertainties which until quite recently attended the writing, not only of names, but of all other words also. The various modifications of spelling in the above list would not greatly affect the pronunciation of the name, and hence its identity has been preserved through all the ill-usage it has met with from the pens of heedless or ignorant writers.

But the corruption of names through mispronunciation has been carried quite as far as their fictitious multiplication through false writing. In this manner doubtless a very large number of the most puzzling oddities of our nomenclature may be accounted for. Mr. Ferguson, whom we have previously quoted, has noticed the fact that, in the corruption of names by this method, the tendency is generally towards a meaning. As examples, he gives *Goodluck*, from *Guthlac*; *Thoroughgood*, from *Thur-good*; and *Grumble* and *Tremble*, from *Grimbold* and *Trumbold*. We can readily understand that a person owning a strangely-sounding name would, upon taking up his abode in a new neighbourhood, be liable to have his title assailed on this principle. A somewhat unworthy tendency of human nature inclines us to turn to ridicule what we do not understand, and to construct for ourselves out of the mysterious something within our comprehension. Thus, we have ourselves heard a newly-imported *Tovey* habitually styled *Toby*, the latter appellation being, as the diminutive of Tobias, the more accustomed word; and similarly we have known the Irish name *Minhenieotte* resolve itself, in an English village, into *mignonette*, the title of the familiar annual of our cottage gardens.

An accustomed appellation, however, becomes liable to corruption of another sort—that which arises from our tendency (in speech as well as in every other matter) to save ourselves all needless trouble. By the operation of this tendency the rough places of pronunciation are made plain; syllables are slurred over and then dropped, and compound sounds give place to simple ones, *Woodhouse* falls into *Woodus*, *Brambleby* becomes *Bramley*, *Roundle* is clipped into *Rundle*, and *Atten-ash* into *Nash*.

Thus a twofold difficulty besets those who would make clear the derivations of our surnames; and yet a large number of the most extraordinary titles have been very plausibly explained by the etymologists. Our curiosities, indeed, are demolished by these gentlemen in a wholesale manner, which we have occasionally felt to be somewhat disappointing. A short time since we were engaged in arranging some of the stranger titles occurring in the registration indexes into lists according to the subjects to which they appeared to relate. The category of "names referring to strong drink, its measurement, &c.," was one which received our notice. We readily found the title *Bacchus*, and chose it as a highly appropriate

heading for our catalogue. But we were soon compelled to displace it ; learning that the word meant nothing more or less than *Bake-house*. *Portwine* next struck us as a valuable acquisition. This too, however, we were obliged to relinquish, on the assurance that it contained no allusion to the familiar Portuguese beverage, but was simply a corruption of *Poitevin*, i. e. a native of Poitou. *Barrel* turned out in like manner to be merely *Barwell*. *Bottle*, we found, came from the Anglo-Saxon word *Bottl*—a dwelling ; and *Gallon* proved to be identical with a Norse word signifying crazy. In this manner many similar curiosities have been disposed of—in some instances, it must be owned, with a positiveness scarcely warranted by the evidence on which the proffered explanation has rested.

But the number of oddities left unassailed is nevertheless exceedingly large. We have before us a long list of such oddities, the origin of which would offer to the curious a wide field for speculation. What, for instance, is the precise value of a *Cypher* amongst titles ? How can we dispel the uncertainties which encompass the cognomen *Doubt* ? Where does *Going* come from, and whither will the investigation of *Igo* lead us ? What are we to think of such surnames as *Left*, *Moist*, *My*, *Nil*, *Ox*, *Puddle*, *Seraphim*, *Secular*, *Temporal*, *Trash*, and *Truly*, which, with multitudes more as startling and ludicrous, appear on the pages of our indexes ?

Two or three fertile sources of strange and irregular nomenclature are indeed easily apparent. *Foundlings* are liable to receive eccentric titles. The ragamuffins who run away from wretched homes to live amongst the Arabs of our towns, and who are fain to conceal the name that associates them with the savage step-mother of the paternal roof—these again are likely to acquire queer appellations ; which, once bestowed, may cling to them through life, and distinguish them in the register book when they die. The illiterate and illegitimate who wander from their birthplace in quest of labour are likewise exposed to similar chances. Thus not a few of our most extraordinary surnames may possibly be of quite recent origin, there being ample opportunity for their introduction even under the circumstances of the present time ; and during the period when family titles were wholly unfixed amongst the lower classes, the occasions favouring the bestowal of ludicrous appellations would necessarily be more numerous still.

Many surnames owe their drollery merely to the modification of meaning which in course of time has befallen the words that originally furnished them. We find at intervals in the registration indexes—almost always, it may be remarked, in connection with the county of Durham—the name *Gossip*, one which has an absurd sound in the present day. This is a word, however, the signification of which has undergone a considerable change. It formerly charged no tattling propensities on the persons to whom it was applied, but was the title given to sponsors at the baptismal font—those who, according to the prevalent belief of the middle ages,

"besides contracting spiritual obligations on behalf of the baptized child, also contracted spiritual affinity one with another, and became *sib* or *akin* in God."* Thus, then, the drollery of the name *Gossip* disappears ; it proves to be a highly honourable title to own, and the process by which it came to be perpetuated as a family name is no longer difficult to understand. Another example of a somewhat similar kind may be given. *Tippler* is a denomination of not unfrequent occurrence, and it is one which, according to the present force of the word, would seem to stand as evidence of habitual intemperance on the part of the founders of the families who bear it. It appears, however, that *tipplers* were formerly not conspicuous consumers, but merely sellers, of intoxicating drink ; and there is, consequently, no real reproach in this queer and seemingly dishonourable surname. Many similar instances might be adduced.

We have remarked above that in the majority of cases surnames were not chosen by the individuals who bore them. They were generally, as their nature often plainly indicates, nothing more or less than the distinguishing appellations conferred on men by their neighbours for the convenience of social intercourse, and taking a permanent and hereditary form in compliance with the custom which in course of time allotted *semi-fixed* title to all. Undoubtedly, however, there were many exceptions to this rule, and foremost amongst such exceptions would be the territorial surnames, which were, in fact, the origin of all the others. These were, of course, assumed by their owners,—being a kind of manifesto of family importance. A very large number of the Norman names were of this description ; and many families amongst us now bear the titles (thus appropriated by their forefathers) of Norman villages and estates. It is probable, however, that not a few persons who imagine their names to be of Norman origin are totally mistaken on the subject. The territorial prefix *de*, for instance, generally supposed to be conclusive proof of French derivation, is very far from being so. The prefix was adopted by the Saxons themselves, in imitation of their Norman conquerors ; and sometimes its conjunction with the names of places merely indicates the French method of writing a name belonging to English people. There is much further misapprehension abroad with regard to surnames which do undoubtedly belong to the French language ; their owners being ready to attribute to them an ancient introduction into this country to which they certainly cannot, in many cases, lay claim. There have been many importations of French names since the Norman conquest ; and probably a large number of those who flatter themselves that their ancestors fought beside William of Normandy at Hastings, are but the descendants of the artisans who flocked over to our shores at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes ! In examining the registers of the refugee churches which were founded in Spitalfields and other places shortly after that

* TRENCH'S *English, Past and Present*, p. 208.

event, we find at any rate a considerable array of family names which are identical with those whose owners love to associate them with the days of chivalry and feudalism. How many, then, of our Aubreys, Beauchamps, Vezseys, and others, "came over" in an orthodox manner with the Conqueror? How many found their way here amongst the 50,000 who fled from persecution in 1685?

But the endeavour to establish an ancient and distinguished descent is, we need scarcely say, very commonly made, even in the face of the most serious denominational difficulties. The registration indexes reveal, in the neighbourhood of many of our most ordinary names, a variety of manœuvres in spelling, by which some of the owners of such titles attempt to escape from the common herd and to assert their own better origin. There seems to be a special sensitiveness on the subject of appellations derived from trades. The goodly fellowship of the *Smiths* has lost various secessionist *Smyths*, *Smythes*, and *Smijhs*, who boast of being unconnected with the parent stock. The *Taylors* have similarly sent forth *Taylcurs*, *Tayleures*, *Tayloes*, and others—each family belonging, by its own declaration at least, to a distinct and superior breed. Unfortunately, however, these disguises are invariably seen through. The only solid comfort which can be offered to persons who thus suffer under titles derived from humble handicrafts, consists in the assurance given by Mr. Dickens concerning a family of whom he has written, and which would equally apply to these martyrs, viz. that being undoubtedly descended in a direct line from Adam and Eve, their progenitors were therefore closely connected with the *agricultural* interest at the earliest period of human history.

NOTE.—The foregoing Article was completed some six months past; all reference, therefore, to the Registration Indexes must be held to apply to their position at that period.—ED. C. M.

The North-Frisian Outlands.

Of the dozen or so of intelligent gentlemen who accompanied the course of the last Schleswig-Holstein war from Altona to Alsen, the majority seem to have been struck with genuine astonishment by the discovery that between Elbe and Schlei there dwells a sturdy race of god-fearing, beef-eating men and women, bearing an unmistakable family likeness to the nation which is so obviously the favourite of heaven. A suspicion of this fact had indeed already crossed the minds of most writers and readers of English history; and had the ingenious correspondents aforesaid been led by the clash of arms to the western instead of the central and eastern districts of that peninsula, had it been worth their while to report on the desperate attempt of the gallant Danish Captain Hammer to maintain his sovereign's rule over the outlying islands of the Schleswig archipelago, they would have been still more amazed at the resemblance between its inhabitants and their countrymen at home, in manners and customs, in language and fashion of speech, in food, and dress, and personal appearance. We should then have learnt, if not for the first time in our lives, at all events for the first time from the columns of a newspaper, that there can be no question as to the existence of a large and important Frisian element in our English nationality; that from the marshes whence, at the present day, horned cattle weekly invade the English markets, bands of seafarers erst crossed the treacherous seas to land far to the north in the Frith of Forth, whose appellation still recalls their name; or far to the south on the Isle of Wight, where their traces are still discoverable in the local nomenclature familiar to all Englishmen from the perusal of the Court Circular. We should have been told that on the rim of the North-Schleswig coast and on the Uthlands or Out-lands, as the islands fronting it are called in the North-Frisian dialects, the *th*, on which Englishmen justly pride themselves as their peculiar insular property, is still pronounced in its native purity; that, indeed, the natives of these districts speak a language far nearer to that of the natives of Hampshire than to that of Brandenburgers or Silesians, and far more intelligible to the former. All these and many cognate facts would have been not the less true because they might not have happened to be precisely new. It is to a different phase in the history of the North-Frisian coast-line and archipelago that these pages are intended to direct attention. This phase has no concern either with the original settlement of England, or with the Schleswig-Holstein question. While the former may be cheerfully left in the hands of Dr. Latham and other combatants, the latter has in these districts scarcely amounted at any time to what

may properly be termed a question. Steadily and stubbornly the Frisian inhabitants of the North-Schleswig coast and islands have resisted any and every attempt at Danisation. When the Danish Government attempted to introduce the Danish language into the churches and schools of Sylt, the most important and (except the small island of Röm) the northernmost of the North-Frisian group, their pastors could find no hearers to listen to their sermons, and their schoolmasters no children to attend their lessons. When at the little Danish colony of List, at the north point of the island, they had fitted up a very neat building, with church and school, for Danish services and instruction, the Prussian and Austrian troops arrived to slit its thin-spun life, and the eleven children of the colony are again taught in German by a schoolmaster from Röm, whom we found solacing his abundant leisure with a treatise on the theory of pedagogics. The unnatural arrangement by which this portion of the island of Sylt, part of the island of Führ, and the whole of the little neighbouring island of Amrum were politically separated* from the Duchy of Schleswig, and included as *enclaves* in the more distant Jutland, was therefore very appropriately as well as necessarily terminated by their incorporation with Schleswig at the peace of Vienna, three years ago.

The conflict on which we are about to touch, and which we are now as it were witnessing with our own eyes during a tranquil seaside sojourn at Westerland or Sylt, is a conflict not between governments, not between nationality and nationality, but one between enemies whose wars are more obstinate than wars between governments, and more certain to end in the absolute victory of the stronger than wars between nationalities. The combatants are the sea and the land, and the victory is with Ennosigeus. Aided by his ancient ally Æolus, he tears strip after strip, and band after band, from the helpless island shores, first burying houses and churches beneath the sands which his ally drives before him up the coast, and then covering sands and ruins alike under the irremovable shroud of his eternal waters. But if he is a powerful foe, he is also a generous friend, proceeding on a principle of vague elementary equity, which mortals call robbing Peter to pay Paul. What he tears from the east he often adds to the west; what he takes from the islands he frequently gives to the mainland.

A glance at the map will illustrate the process, though it cannot precisely verify it. The elaborate maps by which a land-surveyor of the seventeenth century, one Johannes Meyer, accompanied the well-known Schleswig-Holstein chronicle of his patron, Caspar Danckwerth, burgomaster of Husum, as compared with a map of the same districts at the present day, present a sufficiently startling discrepancy.* This discrepancy

* Among modern maps may be consulted that of Schleswig-Holstein, by the Prussian Captain Geerz (official), or that appended to C. P. Hansen : *Das Schleswigsche Wattenmeer und die frissischen Inseln* (Glogau, 1865).

is considerable in those of Meyer's maps, which are of course deserving of implicit credit as delineating the shores of mainland and islands at the time of the publication of the chronicle (1652); it is enormous in the case of those which, with less certainty, represent the outline of coast and archipelago at a date of four centuries previously. The authorities on which these earlier maps are based, are, in the first place, tradition, which may be and is in many cases doubtful (*e. g.* in that of the supposed Friesenhafen, whence the invaders of England are stated to have taken their departure, and in that of the supposed extensive peninsula of Suderstrand, stretching about twenty degrees westwards from Tönning, and even believed by some to have been originally connected with Heligoland); and, in the second, the registers of extinct churches and parishes, in which there is every reason to confide. But even were there no maps in existence embodying the traditions or conjectures of ancient times, the personal experience of living inhabitants, as well as the observations which the traveller can hardly avoid making for himself, would enable him to realise the main features, and to predict the ultimate result of this long-continued conflict.

Husum, which is easily reached from Altona or Kiel, and where the historical traveller may regret to observe the neglect into which successive governments have allowed the old palace, formerly the dower-house of the widowed Duchesses of Schleswig, to fall, is the starting-point for a voyage among the North-Frisian Outlands. After traversing a broad expanse of morass and mud, already converted in part into excellent pasture-land on which the cattle are in training for Newgate Market, we take boat to reach the other extremity of the archipelago, the island of Sylt. We are assured that the clear-eyed little captain on the gangway of the steamer *Nordfriesland* is the most experienced pilot of these treacherous waters; nor, indeed, would it be quite safe for a man to trust himself on them in his own pleasure-yacht. For the six hours' voyage between the Husum and the landing-place Nösse on the eastern shore of Sylt, can only be performed at high water, and even then must be confined to a narrow channel threading itself in a maze of twists and turns through rifts and sandbanks, and past islands and eyots in part of the minutest dimensions. These islands are the remains of an extensive peninsula which formerly stretched out far to the west into the German Ocean. More than a hundred churches and villages, according to the most moderate computation, lie buried beneath the sands which our boat so deftly avoids; and the islands which we pass are mere remnants of their former selves. We are in the so-called Wattenmeer, an untranslatable term, the Watten being the tracts of mud and sand visible at low water. For nine months of the year they produce an abundance of oysters; in autumn they are visited by swarms of widgeon and other wild-fowl from the *Vogelkojen* (preserves) of Föhr and Sylt, as well as by seals, which may be frequently seen disporting themselves in these waters, where the mariners either shoot or harpoon them, or fustigate them to a more ignominious death. The first island which

we pass is Nordstrand, formerly connected with its present neighbour Pellworm, but torn from the latter in the memorable flood of 1684, the most terrible year in the entire history of the North-Frisian Outlands. This flood, brought on, as the Nordstrand preacher Matthias Boethius declared, by the wantonness and avarice of his flock, reduced the island to one-third of its former size, buried in the waves or laid level with the ground 1,800 houses and 19 churches, and destroyed the lives of 6,000 human beings and 50,000 cattle and sheep. The remnant of the inhabitants were unable to exist amidst the ruins of their former prosperity, and to a man deserted the island. It was given up by the Duke of Schleswig to an enterprising body of men familiar with the conflicts between land and water (Dutchmen of course), who imported a colony of Brabanters and set them to work to dyke in, with considerable success, portions of the ancient island. The descendants of these immigrants, Catholics by religion, still live on this island; and the here unique institution of an oratory, served by three priests, survives as a lasting memorial of the enterprising strangers, who have here carried out in miniature a work similar to that which their countrymen have for centuries continued, on the grandest of scales, in their native Waterstaat.

Before we have lost sight of Nordstrand and its divorced neighbour Pellworm, we already come in view of the first of a series of the most speaking monuments of the desperate struggle between the sea and the outposts of the land. These are the so-called *Halligen*, a word of obscure derivation, and said by some to be the root of the name of our own insular colony of Heligoland. They can scarcely be called islands, for they are mere shreds or patches of land in the midst of the water, meadows with the greenest of grass washed by every tide of the sea, inhabited by mere handfuls of men, who dwell in houses raised on hillocks of turf and occasionally supported, like the lake-dwellings of the Scythians in Herodotus, by piles of wood driven into the soppy soil. Many are the stories which have been preserved or invented of the pathetic experiences of these children of the sea—how the men after, like a large proportion of these island-Frisians, leading a life of adventures on Hanseatic or Dutch vessels, return to die on their native morsel of land, where their wives or sweethearts have been keeping a long and solitary watch for their return. Mr. C. P. Hansen, the excellent 'chronicler of Sylt' (where, like his father and grandfather before him, he has long lived as a schoolmaster), whose books contain everything worth knowing about his cherished Archipelago, even quotes a touching poem * (poems, he says, are rare in these parts: *Frisia non cantat*) connected with such a tradition. It is a song of a sister's

* The reader may like to see the first stanza as a specimen:—

Ferjeth me ei, min Hertens liue Brøther,
Wann dø der sillest am a Wral;
Wann dø der stonst an ejongest bei din Routhier,
Ferjeth me ei.

[[“] Forget

longing for her brother far away in command of a Dutch East-Indiaman,—such a one as to this day lies inextricably stranded at the so-called Elbow in the northernmost corner of Sylt,—and is written in a Frisian dialect of the neighbouring mainland. Meanwhile those who stay at home, and make a miserable living by the sale of their cattle, are exposed to calamities of which an instance had occurred on one of the Halligen only a week before we passed by it. The storm of the 27th of July last had swept away the entire crop of hay which lay drying on the meadow, and which the inhabitants of the island had been either too few or too stupid to remove to their solitary hillock. In the Husum newspaper we read a piteous appeal from the minister of this Hallig on behalf of its inhabitants, who in losing their hay had lost their only harvest of the year, and would be forced by want to sell their cattle, their sole property and means of sustenance. These Hallig pastors, it may be mentioned by the way, are young ministers who have to serve their apprenticeship in the church in these poor and desolate localities, before they are promoted to more tolerable and remunerative livings on the mainland. We mention this practice in order to show that there are differences as well as resemblances between the Frisians and their English kinsmen. At the same time, a preposterous notion seems to be gradually growing up even in these out-of-the-way regions that the clergy are underpaid; for we found the little church at Westerland on Sylt pastorless on account of the low salary (*45l. per annum*) which has been hitherto deemed a sufficient remuneration for its spiritual officer.

Past these comfortless cases, often inhabited by not more than a dozen of individuals in a couple of tenements, past the flourishing island of Föhr, where the visitors to the pretty little sea-side place of Wyck are crowded round the bathing-machines under the inspiriting music of the inevitable band, we steam into more open waters and reach at last the Ries-gap (*i.e.* traveller's hole: an appellation which we venture to recommend to the General Steam Navigation Company for their landing-place at St. Catherine's Wharf) on the eastern shore of Sylt, whence a moonlight drive of two hours over sand and marsh brings us to Westerland on the western shore. Nothing but sea any longer separates us from the Yorkshire coast; but that sea has many secrets to tell; and if our readers will bear with us a little longer, we will endeavour in a few notes from the annals of this typical island to picture the main features of the history of the North-Frisian archipelago.

Sylt may be roughly described as a long line of sand extending in the direction of due north to south, with a central hump or projection to the east of marsh and heather-land. The configuration of the island itself

“Forget me not, dear brother of my heart,
When that thou sailest round the world;
When that thou stand’st and singest by thy helm,
Forget me not.”

suggests an approximate idea of the ravages which its territory has undergone during the last six centuries. Its dangerous side is of course the western, where nothing but a chain of sand-hills (Dunes) protects it against the inroads of the German Ocean. On the east a wide expanse of mud stretches towards the Schleswig coast, only partially covered with water at the ebb, and sufficiently shallow to freeze over in winter, when the post accordingly travels across the ice to the little port of Hoyer. But on the western side the sea steadily and irresistibly gains upon the land, by a process of fatal regularity, only interrupted now and then by an incursion of exceptional violence, when the monster rages with uncontrollable fury and casts up from his maw beams and stones, and the very foundations of churches and homesteads which he swallowed centuries ago. As a rule, however, according to the process already indicated, the wind acts as advanced guard. The Dunes, as the inhabitants picturesquely express it, are *wandering Dunes*; moving gradually from west to east and doing in years what the sea will occasionally accomplish in a single night.

Accordingly, several villages on Sylt bear the names of other villages which centuries ago lay three or four miles farther west, on sites now covered by the sea. Such is the case with the village of Wenningstedt and with that of List. Of Eydum the name is only preserved in a spot where the evicted villagers for a time stowed the relics of their goods and chattels.

In the little church of Westerland is an altar-screen, unmistakably dating from Catholic times, which originally decorated the church of the now vanished Eydum, and had, according to tradition, been brought thither from the previously destroyed old List. But the history of Rantum, the present village of which name lies about half-way down the southern peninsula of the island, most clearly exemplifies the process.

The original old Rantum lay about four miles out from the present shore. On All Saints' eve, 1486, came a terrific storm which buried this Rantum, as well as Eydum, beneath the waters. Some of the remaining inhabitants hereupon built a second Rantum nearer the present western coast-line of the same peninsula. Then the wind began its gradual work, driving in the sand till it buried house after house beneath its drifts, and till at last (about a century ago) the church had to be moved further inland. But even this church—the third—which is still remembered by a few old people, had to be broken off in its turn; the village had to be shifted once more to the east of the Dunes; in 1828 only thirteen houses remained; at the present day only six are standing, and these also a speedy end await. An old woman with a baby in her arms, with whom we spoke, in one of these houses, could recall the time when Rantum church was still standing; if the child lives to its grandmother's age, it will infallibly survive the last homestead of the doomed village. When the wind has done his work, the sea follows, driving the Dunes to the east; nor can many years elapse before the work of destruction is accomplished and the whole of the southern and northern peninsulas covered with water.

The island is of course too poor to make it worth the while of the government to protect the western coast by breakwaters and piers. Few and far between are the sails visible on the horizon, while numerous fragments of ships, and sea-chests with the names of English owners and ports, attest the fate of those whom ignorance or stress of weather has driven upon the sandriffs. The inhabitants, who offer a temporary resistance to the sea by constructing a network of grass and reeds to catch the sand, laugh at the notion entertained by recent semi-official visitors, that any permanent opposition can by such means be maintained against the incursions of an enemy whom they know only too well. When the sea takes only three nights to break up a ship of large burden stranded on the eastern shore, the idea of keeping it out by a flimsy texture of straw, appears childish to the Sylters. They wisely point out that the Government would do better to follow nature than to resist her, by draining and enclosing the land on the eastern peninsula and its vicinity, which is to all intents and purposes safe.

Such are the main conditions of this continuous conflict between the elements—a conflict not indeed comparable in interest to that on the coast of Holland where an enterprising nation has conquered nature, but interesting and almost pathetic from the very circumstance of the helplessness of the islanders against their hereditary foe. These islanders—Paulsens, and Hansens, and Lorenzans, and Claassens, and all the others that end in *sen*—are themselves well deserving of study; but they are canny folk like their cousins in the Lowlands, and by no means anxious to be drawn out. The Sylters, like the rest of their Frisian brethren, are an orderly and peaceful race, which has long patiently paid its taxes to its Danish rulers, and will doubtless continue to pay them to its Prussian deliverors, albeit these latter have lost no time in visiting the islanders with the Prussian income-tax (*Classen-stuer*),—an imposition hitherto unknown in these parts. Denmark and Prussia have hitherto both found willing subjects in all the Frisians, because they have wisely respected the *Land-recht* of the country, and have infringed none of the ancient rights and customs endeared to the people by a long and unbroken continuance. A lesson might possibly be learnt in this respect by our own Government as to the treatment of our own Frisian islanders on Heligoland, where the paternal interference of the Colonial Office has managed to raise a pretty little storm in a teacup by the imposition of a constitution of British manufacture.* In the island of Sylt the Prussian Government is represented by a *Land-vogt*, who superintends the collection of the taxes and all other matters of provincial administration. But the exercise of judicial functions, and the interpretation of the laws and customs of the country belong to the Common Council, or *Sylter Rath*, which assembles

* An account has lately appeared in the (German) newspapers of an odd visit paid by the Duke of Buckingham, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to the recalcitrant island in the month of June last, and of a lecture read by his Grace to a committee of the inhabitants on board a Danish ship-of-war.

annually or oftener, and is composed of twelve of the chief proprietors in the island, assisted by six other members chosen by the peasantry, or Bauerschaft. The council thus forms a free popular tribunal, with jurisdiction in both civil and criminal cases, and has even pronounced sentence of death for grave offences.

At Keitum, the capital of the island where this Common Council meets, the relic of the representative body which of old assembled on the *Thing*-hills, still visible near the neighbouring Thinnum, the worthy cattle-farmers and retired sea-captains are said to entertain a wholesome dread of the new-fangled notions likely to be introduced by the *Badegäste* at Westerland. It is indeed not unlikely that this watering-place, the only one in Germany which lies open to the German Ocean, and which is already stated to have attracted the attention of a Berlin speculator, may have what hôtel-keepers and proprietors of bathing-machines call a future before it. At present its comforts are neither numerous nor sybaritic. Yet we trust that the inroads of civilization may not justify the apprehensions of contingent demoralisation which disquiet the minds of the native inhabitants. May their trim cottages, all built after a single model, with their tile-covered walls and windows full of flower-pots, remain sacred from intrusion, though their doors be left as heretofore unlocked by day and night! May the Frisian dialect of their white-pated sons be preserved pure from the alloy of Berlin or Hamburg lingo, and the long flaps descending from their daughters' head-gear veil their rubicund countenances from the gaze of the profane! May the sea, which brings them both health and wealth, be slow to encroach still farther upon their flourishing homesteads, and may their graves be undisturbed on the heights of Keitum, not beaten by the impetuous and ruthless sea!



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Lady Denzil.

CHAPTER I.



THE Denzils were the chief people at Dinglefield Green. Their house was by much the most considerable-looking house, and the grounds were beautiful. I say the most considerable-looking, for my own impression is that Dinglewood, which was afterwards bought by the stockbroker whose coming 'convulsed the whole Green,' was in reality larger than the Lodge; but the Lodge, when Sir Thomas Denzil was in it, was all the same the centre of everything. It was like Windsor Castle to us neighbours, or perhaps in reality it was more what her Majesty's actual royal habitation is to the dwellers within her castle gates. We were the

poor knights, the canons, the musical and ecclesiastical people who cluster about that mingled stronghold of the State and Church—but to the Lodge was it given to bestow distinction upon us. Those of us who visited Lady Denzil entered into all the privileges of rank; those who did not receive that honour fell into the cold shade—and a very uncomfortable shade it must have been. I speak, you will say, at my ease; for my people had known the Denzils ages before, and Sir Thomas most kindly sent his wife to call, almost before I had settled down into my cottage; but I remember how very sore Mrs. Wood felt about it, though it surprised me at the time. "I have been here five years, and have met them everywhere; but she has never found the way to my door. Not that I care in the least," she said, with a flush on her cheek. She was a clergyman's widow, and very sensitive about her "position," poor thing—and almost found fault with me, as if I was to blame for having known the Denzils in my youth.

Lady Denzil, who had so much weight among us, was a very small personage. She would have been tiny and insignificant had she not been so stately and imposing. I don't know how she did it. She was not far from sixty at the time I speak of. Whatever the fashion was, she always

wore long flowing dresses which swept the ground for a yard behind her, and cloaks ample and graceful : always large, always full, and always made of black silk. Even in winter, though her carriage would be piled with heaps of furs, she wore upon her little majestic person nothing but silk. Such silk !—you should have touched it to know what it was. The very sound of it, as it rustled softly after her over the summer lawn or the winter carpet, was totally different from the *frôlement* of ordinary robes. Some people said she had it made for herself express at Lyons. I don't know how that might be, but I know I never saw anything like it. I believe she had every variety in her wardrobe that heart of woman could desire : Indian shawls worth a fortune I *know* were among her possessions ; but she never wore anything but that matchless silk—long dresses of it, and long, large ample cloaks to correspond. Her hair was quite white, like silver. She had the brightest dark eyes shining out from under brows which were curved and lined as finely as when she was eighteen. Her colour was as fresh as a rose. I think there never was a more lovely old lady. Eighteen, indeed ! It has its charms, that pleasant age. It is sweet to the eye, especially of man. Perhaps a woman, who has oftenest to lecture the creature, instead of falling down to worship, may not see so well the witchery which lies in the period ; but find me any face of eighteen that could match Lady Denzil's. It had wrinkles, yes ; but these were crossed by lines of thought, and lighted up by that soft breath of experience and forbearance which comes only with the years. Lady Denzil's eyes saw things that other eyes could not see. She knew by instinct when things were amiss. You could tell it by the charitable absence of all questioning, by a calm taking for granted the most unlikely explanations. Some people supposed they deceived her, but they never deceived her. And some people spoke of her extraordinary insight, and eyes that could see through a millstone. I believe her eyes were clear ; but it was experience, only experience—long knowledge of the world, acquaintance with herself and human nature, and all the chances that befall us on our way through this life. That it was, and not any mere intuition or sharpness, that put insight into Lady Denzil's eyes.

The curious thing, however, was that she had never had any troubles of her own. She had lived with Sir Thomas in the Lodge since a period dating far beyond my knowledge. It was a thing which was never mentioned among us, chiefly, I have no doubt, because of her beautiful manners and stately look, though it came to be spoken of afterwards, as such things will ; but the truth is, that nobody knew very clearly who Lady Denzil was. Sir Thomas's first wife was from Lancashire, of one of the best old families in the county, and it was not an unusual thing for new comers to get confused about this, and identify the present Lady Denzil with her predecessor ; but I am not aware that any one really knew the rights of it or could tell who she was. I have heard the mistake made, and I remember distinctly the gracious and unsatisfactory way with which she put it aside. "The first Lady Denzil was

"a Lancashire woman," she said; "she was one of the Tunstalls of Abbotts-Tunstall, and a very beautiful and charming person." This was all; she did not add, as anybody else would have done, Loamshire or Blankshire is my county. It was very unsatisfactory: but it was fine all the same—and closed everybody's mouth. There were always some connexions on the Denzil side staying at the Lodge in the end of the year. Nothing could be kinder than she was to all Sir Thomas's young connexions. But nobody belonging to Lady Denzil was ever seen among us. I don't think it was remarked at the time, but it came to be noted afterwards, and it certainly was very strange.

I never saw more perfect devotion than that which old Sir Thomas showed to his wife. He was about ten years older than she—a hale handsome old man, nearly seventy. Had he been twenty-five and she eighteen he could not have been more tender, more careful of her. Often have I looked at her and wondered, with the peaceful life she led, with the love and reverence and tender care which surrounded her, how she had ever come to know the darker side of life, and understand other people's feelings. No trouble seemed ever to have come to her. She put down her dainty little foot only to walk over soft carpets or through bright gardens; she never went anywhere where those long silken robes might not sweep, safe even from the summer dust, which all the rest of us have to brave by times. Lady Denzil never braved it. I have seen her sometimes—very seldom—with her dress gathered up in her arms in great billows, on the sheltered sunny lime-walk which was at one side of the Lodge, taking a little gentle exercise; but this was quite an unusual circumstance, and meant that the roads were too heavy or too slippery for her horses. On these rare occasions Sir Thomas would be at her side, like a courtly old gallant as he was. He was as deferential to his wife as if she had been a princess and he dependent on her favour, and at the same time there was a grace of old love in his reverence which was like a poem. It was a curious little Paradise that one looked into over the ha-ha across the verdant lawns that encircled the Lodge. The two were old and childless, and sometimes solitary; but I don't think, though they opened their house liberally to kith, kin, and connexions, that they ever felt less lonely than when they were alone. Two, where the two are one, is enough. To be sure the two in Eden were young. Yet it does but confer a certain tender pathos upon that companionship when they are old. I thought of the purest romance I knew, of the softest creations of poetry, when I used to see old Sir Thomas in the lime-walk with his old wife.

But I am sorry she had not called on poor Mrs. Wood. It would have been of real consequence to that good woman if Lady Denzil had called. She was only a clergyman's widow, and a clergyman's widow may be anything, as everybody knows: she may be such a person as will be an acquisition anywhere, or she may be quite the reverse. It was because Mrs. Wood belonged to this indefinite class that Lady Denzil's visit would have been of

such use. Her position was doubtful, poor soul. She was very respectable and very good in her way, and her daughters were nice girls, but there was nothing in themselves individually to raise them out of mediocrity. I took the liberty to say so one day when I was at the Lodge, but Lady Denzil did not see it, somehow; and what could I do? And on the other hand, it was gall and wormwood to poor Mrs. Wood every time she saw the carriage with the two bays stop at my door.

"I saw Lady Denzil here to-day," she would say. "You ought to feel yourself honoured. I must say I don't see why people should give in to her so. In my poor husband's time the Duchess never came into the parish without calling. It need not be any object to me to be noticed by a bit of a baronet's wife."

"No, indeed!" said I, being a coward and afraid to stand to my guns; "I am sure it is not worth your while. And she is old, poor lady—and I am an old friend—and indeed I don't know that Lady Denzil professes to visit," I went on faltering, with a sense of getting deeper and deeper into the mud.

"Oh, pray don't say so to spare my feelings," said Mrs. Wood, with asperity. "It is nothing to me whether she calls or not, but you must know, Mrs. Mulgrave, that Lady Denzil does make a point of calling on every one she thinks worth her while. I am sure she is quite at liberty to do as she pleases so far as I am concerned." Here she stopped and relieved herself, drawing a long breath and fanning with her handkerchief her cheeks which were crimson. "But if I were to say I was connected with the peerage, or to talk about the titled people I do know," she added, with a look of spite, "she would very soon find out where I lived: oh, trust her for that!"

"I think you must have taken up a mistaken idea," I said, meekly. I had not courage enough to stand up in my friend's defence. Not that I am exactly a coward by nature, but I knew that Mrs. Wood was a dangerous person to deal with; and I was sorry in the present instance, and felt that the grievance was a real one. "I don't think Lady Denzil cares very much about the peerage. She is an old woman and has her fancies, I suppose."

"Oh, you are a favourite!" said Mrs. Wood, tossing her head, as if it was my fault. "You have the *entrée*, and we are spiteful who are left out, you know," she added with pretended playfulness. It was a very affected little laugh, however, to which she gave utterance, and her cheeks flamed crimson. I was very sorry—I did not know what to say to make things smooth again. If I had been Lady Denzil's keeper I should have taken her to call at Rose Cottage next day. But I was not Lady Denzil's keeper. It was great kindness of her to visit me: how could I force her against her will to visit other people? A woman of Mrs. Wood's age, who surely could not have got so far through the world without a little understanding of how things are managed, ought to have known that it could do her very little good to quarrel with me.

And then the girls would come to me when there was anything going on at the Lodge. "We met the Miss Llewellyns the other day," Adelaide said on one occasion. "We thought them very nice. They are staying with Lady Denzil, you know. I wish you would make Lady Denzil call on mamma, Mrs. Mulgrave. It is so hard to come and settle in a place and be shut out from all the best parties. Until you have been at the Lodge you are considered nobody on the Green."

"The Lodge can't make us different from what we are," said Nora, the other sister, who was of a different temper. "I should be ashamed to think it mattered whether Lady Denzil called or not."

"But it does matter a great deal when they are going to give a ball," said Adelaide, very solemnly. "The best balls going, some of the officers told me; and everybody will be there—except Nora and me," said the poor girl. "Oh, Mrs. Mulgrave, I wish you would make Lady Denzil call!"

"But, my dear, I can't make Lady Denzil do anything," I said; "I have no power over her. She comes to see me sometimes, but we are not intimate, and I have no influence. She comes because my people knew the Denzils long ago. She has her own ways. I could not make her do one thing or another. It is wrong to speak so to me."

"But you could if you would try," said Adelaide: as she spoke, we could hear the sound of the croquet balls from the Lodge, and voices and laughter. We were all three walking along the road, under shelter of the trees. She gave such a wistful look when she heard them, that it went to my heart. It was not a very serious trouble, it is true. But still, to feel oneself shut out from anything, is hard when one is twenty. I had to hurry past the gate, to restrain the inclination I had to brave everything, and take them in with me, as my friends, to join the croquet party. I know very well what would have happened had I done so. Lady Denzil would have been perfectly sweet and gracious, and sent them away delighted with her; but she would never have crossed my threshold again. And what good would that have done them? The fact was, they had nothing particular to recommend them; no special qualities of their own to make up for their want of birth and connexion: and this being the case, what could any one say?

It gave one a very different impression of Lady Denzil, to see how she behaved when poor Mrs. Stoke was in such trouble about her youngest boy. I had been with her calling, and Mrs. Stoke had told us a whole long story about him: how good-hearted he was, and how generous, spending his money upon everybody. It was a very hard matter for me to keep my countenance, for of course I knew Everard Stoke, and what kind of a boy he was. But Lady Denzil took it all with the greatest attention and sympathy. I could not but speak of it when we came out. "Poor Mrs. Stoke!" said I; "it is strange how she can deceive herself so—and she must have known we knew better. You who have seen poor Everard grow up, Lady Denzil——"

"Yes, my dear," she said, "you are right; and yet, do you know, I

think you are wrong too? She is not deceived. She knows a great deal better than we do. But then she is on the other side of the scene, and she sees into the boy's heart a little. I hope she sees into his heart."

"I fear it is a very bad heart; I should not think it was any pleasure to look into it," said I, in my haste. Lady Denzil gave me a soft, half-reproachful look. "Well," she said, and gave a sigh, "it has always been one of my great fancies, that God was more merciful than man, because He saw fully what was in all our hearts. What we meant, poor creatures that we are, not what we did. We never have any confidence in Him for that. We think He will forgive and save, but we don't think He understands, and sees everything, and knows that nothing is so bad as it seems. Perhaps it is dangerous doctrine; at least the vicar would think so, I fear."

"In the case of Everard Stoke," said I, stupidly, coming back to the starting point.

"My dear," said Lady Denzil with a little impatience, "the older one grows, the less one feels inclined to judge any one. Indeed when one grows quite old," she went on after a pause, smiling a little, as if it were at the thought that she, whom no doubt she could remember so thoughtless and young, *was* quite old, "one comes to judge not at all. Poor Everard, he never was a good boy—but I daresay his mother knows him best, and he is better than is thought."

"At least it was a comfort to her to see you look as if you believed her," said I, not quite entering into the argument. Lady Denzil took no notice of this speech. It was a beautiful bright day, and it was but a step from Mrs. Stoke's cottage to the Lodge gates, which we were just about entering. But at that moment there was a little party of soldiers marching along the high-road, at right angles from where we stood. It is not far from the Green to the barracks, and their red coats were not uncommon features in the landscape. These men, however, were marching in a business-like way, not lingering on the road, and among them was a man in a shooting-coat, handcuffed, poor fellow. It was a deserter they were taking back to the punishment that awaited him. I made some meaningless exclamation or other, and stood still, looking after them for a moment. Then I suppose my interest failed, as they went on, at their rapid, steady pace, turning their backs upon us. I came back to Lady Denzil as it were; but when I looked at her, there was something in her face that struck me with the deepest wonder. She had not come back to me. She was standing absorbed, watching them; the colour all gone out of her soft old cheeks, and the saddest wistful, longing gaze in her eyes. It was not pity,—it was something mightier, more intense. She did not breathe or move, but stood gazing, gazing, after them. When they had disappeared, she came to herself; her hands, which had been clasped tightly, fell loose at her sides; she gave a long, deep sigh, and then she became conscious of my eyes upon her, and the colour came back with a rush to her face.

"I am always interested about soldiers," she said faintly, turning as she spoke to open the gate. That was all the notice she took of it. But the incident struck me more than my account of it may seem to justify. If such a thing had been possible as that the deserter could have been her husband or her brother, one could have understood it. Had I seen such a look on Mrs. Stoke's face, I should have known it was Everard. But here was Lady Denzil, a contented childless woman, without anybody to disturb her peace. Sympathy must indeed have become perfect, before such a wistfulness could come into any woman's eyes.

Often since I have recalled that scene to my mind, and wondered over it: the quick march of the soldiers on the road; the man in the midst with death environing him all round, and most likely despair in his heart; and that one face looking on, wistful as love, sad as death—and yet with no cause either for her sadness or her love. It did not last long, it is true; but it was one of the strangest scenes I ever witnessed in my life.

It even appeared to me next day as if Lady Denzil had been a little shaken, either by her visit to Mrs. Stoke, or by this strange little episode which nobody knew of. She had taken to me, which I confess I felt as a great compliment. And Sir Thomas came to ask me to go to her next afternoon. "My lady has a headache," he said in a quaint way he had of speaking of her: I think he would have liked to call her my queen or my princess. When he said "my lady" there was something chivalric, something romantic in his very tone. When I went into the drawing-room at the Lodge the great green blind was drawn over the window on the west side, and the trees gave the same green effect to the daylight, at the other end. The east windows looked out upon the lime walk, and the light came in softly, green and shadowy, through the silken leaves. She was lying on the sofa, which was not usual with her. As soon as I entered the room she called me to come and sit by her—and of course she did not say a word about yesterday. We went on talking for an hour and more, about the trees, and the sunset; about what news there was; girls going to be married, and babies coming, and other such domestic incidents. And sometimes the conversation would languish for a moment, and I did think once there was something strange in her eyes, when she looked at me, as if she had something to tell and was looking into my face to see whether she might or might not do it. But it never went any further; we began to speak of Molly Jackson, and that was an interminable subject. Molly was a widow in the village, and she gave us all a great deal of trouble. She had a quantity of little children, to whom the people on the Green were very kind, and she was a good-natured soft soul, always falling into some scrape or other. This time was the worst of all; it was when the talk got up about Thomas Short. People said that Molly was going to marry him. It would have been very foolish for them both, of course. He was poor and he was getting old, and would rather have hindered than helped her with her children. We gentlefolks may, or may not, be sentimental about our own concerns; but we see things in their true light

when they take place among our poor neighbours. As for the two being a comfort to each other we never entered into that question ; there were more important matters concerned.

"I don't know what would become of the poor children," said I. "The man would never put up with them, and indeed it could not be expected ; and they have no friends to go to. But I don't think Molly would be so wicked ; she may be a fool, but she has a mother's heart."

Lady Denzil gave a faint smile and turned on her sofa as if something hurt her ; she did not answer me all at once—and as I sat for a minute silent in that soft obscurity, Molly Jackson, I acknowledge, went out of my head. Then all at once when I had gone on to something else, she spoke ; and her return to the subject startled me, I could not have told how.

"There are different ways of touching a mother's heart," she said ; "she might think it would be for their good ; I don't think it ould be, for my part ; I don't think it ever is ; a woman is deceived, or she deceives herself ; and then when it is too late——"

"What is too late ?" said Sir Thomas behind us. He had come in at the great window, and we had not noticed. I thought Lady Denzil gave a little start, but there was no sign of it in her face.

"We were talking of Molly Jackson," she said. "Nothing is ever too late here, thanks to your precise habits, you old soldier. Molly must be talked to, Mrs. Mulgrave," she said, turning to me.

"O yes, she will be talked to," said I ; "I know the Rector and his wife have both called ; and last time I saw her, Mrs. Wood——"

"You are not one of the universal advisers," said Lady Denzil, patting my arm with her white hand. It was no virtue on my part, but she spoke as if she meant it for a compliment. And then we had to tell the whole story over again to Sir Thomas, who was very fond of a little gossip like all the gentlemen, but had to have everything explained to him, and never knew what was coming next. He chuckled and laughed as men do over it. "Old fool!" he said. "A woman with half-a-dozen children." It was not Molly but Thomas Short that he thought would be a fool ; and on our side, it is true that we had not been thinking of him.

Molly Jackson has not much to do with this story, but yet it may be as well to say that she listened to reason, and did not do anything so absurd. It was a relief to all our minds when Thomas went to live in Langham parish the spring after, and married somebody there. I believe it was a girl out of the workhouse, who might have been his daughter, and led him a very sad life. But still in respect to Molly it was a relief to our minds. I hope she was of the same way of thinking. I know for one thing that she lost her temper, the only time I ever saw her do it—and was very indignant about the young wife. "Old fool!" she said, and again it was Thomas that was meant. We had a way of talking a good deal about the village folks, and we all did a great deal for them—perhaps, on the whole, we did too much. When anything happened to

be wanting among them, instead of making an effort to get it for themselves, it was always the ladies on the Green they came to. And, of course, we interfered in our turn.

CHAPTER II.

IT was in the spring of the following year that little Mary first came to the Lodge. Sir Thomas had been absent for some time, on business, Lady Denzil said, and it was he who brought the child home. It is all impressed on my mind by the fact that I was there when they arrived. He was not expected until the evening, and I had gone to spend an hour with Lady Denzil in the afternoon. It was a bright spring day, as warm as summer ; one of those sweet surprises that come upon us in England in intervals between the grey east wind and the rain. The sunshine had called out a perfect crowd of golden crocuses along the borders. They had all blown out quite suddenly, as if it had been an actual voice that called them, and God's innocent creatures had rushed forth to answer to their names. And there were heaps of violets about the Lodge which made the air sweet. And there is something in that first exquisite touch of spring which moves all hearts. Lady Denzil had come out with me to the lawn. I thought she was quieter than usual, with the air of a woman listening for something. Everything was very still, and yet in the sunshine one felt as if one could hear the buds unfolding, the young grass and leaflets thrilling with their new life. But it did not seem to me that Lady Denzil was listening to these. I said, "Do you expect Sir Thomas now?" with a kind of vague curiosity ; and she looked in my face with a sudden quick glance of something like suspicion which I could not understand.

"Do I look as if I expected something?" she said. "Yes—I expect some news that probably I shall not like. But it does not matter, my dear. It is nothing that affects *me*."

She said these words with a smile that was rather dreary to see. It was not like Lady Denzil. It was like saying, "So long as it does not affect *me* you know I don't care"—which was so very very far from my opinion of her. I did not know what to answer. Her tone somehow disturbed the spring feeling, and the harmony of the flowers.

"I wish Sir Thomas had been here on such a lovely day," she said, after a while ; "he enjoys it so. Peace is very pleasant, my dear, when you are old. You don't quite appreciate it yet, as we do." And then she paused again and seemed to listen, and permitted herself the faintest little sigh.

"I think I am older than you, Lady Denzil," I said.

Then she laughed in her natural soft way, "I daresay you are," she said. "That is the difference between your restless middle age and our oldness. You feel old because you feel young. That's how it is ; whereas being really old, we can afford to be young again—sometimes," she added,

softly. The last word was said under her breath. I don't suppose she thought I heard it; but I did, being very quick of hearing, and very fond of her, and feeling there was something underneath which I did not know.

Just then there came a sound of wheels upon the road, and Lady Denzil started slightly. "You have put it into my head that Sir Thomas might come by the three-o'clock train," she said. "It would be about time for it now." She had scarcely stopped speaking and we had just turned towards the gate, when a carriage entered. I saw at once it was one of the common flys that are to be had at the station, and that it was Sir Thomas who put his head out at the window. A moment after it stopped. He had seen Lady Denzil on the lawn. He got out with that slight hesitation which betrays an old man; and then he turned and lifted something out of the carriage. For the first moment one could not tell what it was—he made a long stride on to the soft greensward, with his eyes fixed upon Lady Denzil, and then he put down the child ~~on~~ the lawn. "Go to that lady," he said. For my part I stood and stared, knowing nothing of the feelings that might lie underneath. The child stood still with her little serious face and looked at us both for a moment, and then she walked steadily up to Lady Denzil, who had not moved. I was quite unprepared for what followed. Lady Denzil fell down on her knees on the grass—she took the child to her, into her arms, close to her breast. All at once she fell into a passion of tears. And yet that does not express what I saw. It was silent; there were no cries nor sobs, such as a young woman might have uttered. The tears fell as if they had been pent up all her life, as if all her life she had been waiting for this moment; while Sir Thomas stood looking on, half sad, half satisfied. It seemed a revelation to him as it was to me. All this time when she had looked so serene and had been so sweet, had she been carrying those tears in her heart? I think that must have been what was passing through Sir Thomas's mind. I had stood and stared, as one does, when one is unexpectedly made the spectator of a crisis in another life. When I came to myself I was ashamed of spying as it were upon Lady Denzil's feelings. I hastened away, shaking hands with Sir Thomas as I passed him. And so entirely was his mind absorbed in the scene before him, that I scarcely think he knew who I was.

After this it may be supposed I took a very great interest in little Mary. At first I was embarrassed and did not quite know what to do—whether I should go back next day and ask for the child, and give Lady Denzil an opportunity of getting over any confusion she might feel at the recollection that I had been present—or whether I should stay away; but it turned out that Lady Denzil was not half so sensitive as I was on the subject. I stayed away for one whole day thinking about little else—and the next day I went, lest they should think it strange. It seemed quite curious to me to be received as if nothing had happened. There was no appearance of anything out of the ordinary course. When I went in Lady Denzil held out her hand to me as usual without rising from her chair. "What has

become of you?" she said, and made me sit down by her, as she always did. After we had talked awhile she rang the bell. "I have something to show you," she said, smiling. And then little Mary came in, in her little brown Holland overall, as if it was the most natural thing in the world. She was the most lovely child I ever saw. I know when I say this that everybody will immediately think of a golden-haired blue-eyed darling. But she was not of that description. Her hair was brown—not dark, but of the shade which grows dark, with years; and it was very fine silky hair, not frizzy and rough as is the fashion now-a-days. Her eyes were brown, too, of that tender wistful kind which are out of fashion like the hair. Every look the child gave was an appeal. There are some children's eyes that look at you with perfect trust, believing in everybody; and these are sweet eyes. But little Mary's were sweeter still, for they told you she believed in *you*. "Take care of me: be good to me—I trust you," was what they said; "not everybody, but you." This was the expression in them; and I never knew anybody who could resist that look. Then she had the true child's beauty of a lovely complexion, pure red and white. She came up to me, and looked at me with those tender serious eyes, and then slid her soft little hand into mine. Even when I had ceased talking to her and petting her, she never took her eyes away from my face. It was the creature's way of judging of the new people among whom she had been brought—for she was only about six, too young to draw much insight from words. I was glad to bend my head over her, to kiss her sweet little face and smooth her pretty hair by way of hiding a certain embarrassment I felt. But I was the only one of the three that was embarrassed. Lady Denzil sat and looked at the child with eyes that seemed to run over with content. "She is going to stay with me, and take care of me," she said, with a smile of absolute happiness; "are not you, little Mary?"

"Yes, my lady," said the little thing, turning serious as a judge, to the old lady. I could not help giving a little start as I looked from one to the other, and saw the two pairs of eyes meet. Lady Denzil was near sixty, and little Mary was but six; but it was the same face; I felt quite confused after I had made this discovery, and sat silent and heard them talk to each other. Even in the little voice there was a certain trill which was like Lady Denzil's. Then the whole scene rushed before me. Lady Denzil on her knees, and her tears pouring forth and the child clasped in her arms. What did it mean? My lady was childless—and even had it been otherwise, that baby never could have been *her* child—who was she? I was so bewildered and surprised that it took from me the very power of speech.

After this strange introduction the child settled down as an inmate of the Lodge, and was seen and admired by everybody. And every one discovered the resemblance. The neighbours on the Green all found it out, and as there was no reason we knew of, why she should not be Lady Denzil's relation, we all stated our opinion plainly—except perhaps myself. I had seen more than the rest, though that was almost nothing. I had a

feeling that there was an unknown story beneath, and somehow I had not the courage to say to Lady Denzil as I sat there alone with her, and had her, perhaps, at a disadvantage, "How like the child is to you!" But other people were not so cowardly. Not long after, two or three of us met at the Lodge, at the hour of afternoon tea, which was an invention of the time which Lady Denzil had taken to very kindly. Among the rest was young Mrs. Plymley, who was not precisely one of us. She was one of the Herons of Marshfield, and she and her husband had taken Willowbrook for the summer. She was a pleasant little woman, but she was fond of talking—nobody could deny that. And she had children of her own, and made a great fuss over little Mary the moment she saw her. The child was too much a little lady to be disagreeable, but I could see she did not like to be lifted up on a stranger's knee, and admired and chattered over. "I wish my Ada was half as pretty," Mrs. Plymley said; "but Ada is so like her poor dear papa," and here she pretended to sigh. "I am so fond of pretty children. It is hard upon me to have mine so plain. Oh, you little darling! Mary What? you have only told me half your name. Lady Denzil, one can see in a moment she belongs to you."

Lady Denzil at the moment was pouring out tea. All at once the silver teapot in her hand seemed to give a jerk, as if it were a living creature, and some great big boiling drops fell on her black dress. It was only for a single second, and she had presence of mind to set it down, and smile and say she was awkward, and it was nothing. "My arm is always shaky when I hold anything heavy," she said; "ever since I had the rheumatism in it." Then she turned to Mrs. Plymley, whose injudicious suggestion we had all forgotten in our fright. Perhaps Lady Denzil had lost her self-possession a little. Perhaps it was only that she thought it best to reply at once, so that everybody might hear. "Belongs to me?" she said with her clear voice. And somehow we all felt immediately that something silly and uncalled-for had been said.

"I mean your side of the house," said poor Mrs. Plymley, abashed. She was young and nervous, and felt, like all the rest of us, that she was for the moment the culprit at the bar.

"She belongs to neither side of the house," said Lady Denzil, with even unnecessary distinctness. "Sir Thomas knows her people, and in his kindness he thought a change would be good for her. She is no connexion; nothing at all to us."

"Oh, I am sure I beg your pardon," said Mrs. Plymley; and she let little Mary slide down from her lap, and looked very uncomfortable. None of us indeed were at our ease, for we had all been saying it in private. Only little Mary, standing in the middle, looked wistful round upon us, questioning, yet undisturbed. And Lady Denzil, too, stood and looked. At that moment the likeness was stronger than ever.

"It is very droll," said Mrs. Damerel, the Rector's wife, whose eye was caught by it, like mine. "She is very like you, Lady Denzil; I never saw an accidental likeness so strong."

"Poor little Mary! do you think she is like me?" said Lady Denzil with a curious quiver in her voice; and she bent over the child all at once and kissed her. Sir Thomas had been at the other end of the room, quite out of hearing. I don't know by what magnetism he could have known that something agitating was going on—I did not even see him approach or look; but all at once, just as his wife betrayed that strange thrill of feeling, Sir Thomas was at her elbow. He touched her arm quite lightly as he stood by her side.

"I should like some tea," he said.

She stood up and looked at him for a moment as if she did not understand. And then she turned to the tea-table with something like a blush of shame on her face. Then he drew forward a chair and sat down by Mrs. Plymley and began to talk. He was a very good talker when he pleased, and in two seconds we had all wandered away to our several subjects, and were in full conversation again. But it was some time before Lady Denzil took any part in it. She was a long while pouring out those cups of tea. Little Mary, as if moved by some strange unconscious touch of sympathy, stole away with her doll into a corner. It was as if the two had been made out of the same material and thrilled to the same touch—they both turned their backs upon us for the moment. I don't suppose anybody but myself noticed this; and to be sure it was simply because I had seen the meeting between them, and knew there was something in it more than the ordinary visit to the parents' friends of a little delicate child.

Besides, the child never looked like a little visitor; she had brought no maid with her, and she spoke very rarely of her home. I don't know how she might be dressed under those brown Holland overalls, but these were the only outside garb she ever wore. I don't mean to say they were ugly or wanting in neatness; they wore such things as the children at the Rectory wore in summer when they lived in the garden and the fields. But they did not look suitable for the atmosphere of the Lodge. By-and-by these outer garments disappeared. The little creature blossomed out, as it were, out of her brown husk, and put forth new flowers. After the first few weeks she wore nothing but dainty white frocks, rich with needlework. I recognized Lady Denzil's taste in everything she put on. It was clear that her little wardrobe was being silently renewed, and every pretty thing which a child of her age could fitly wear was being added to it. This could never have been done to a little visitor who had come for change of air. Then a maid was got for her, whom Lady Denzil was very particular about; and no one ever spoke of the time when little Mary should be going away. By degrees she grew to belong to the place, to be associated with everything in it. When you approached the house, which had always been so silent, perhaps it was a burst of sweet childish laughter that met your ears; perhaps a little song, or the pleasant sound of her little feet on the gravel in the sunny lime-walk. The servants were all utterly under her sway. They spoke of little Miss Mary as they might have spoken of a little

princess whose word was law. As for Sir Thomas, I think he was the first subject in her realm. She took to patronizing and ordering him about before she had been a month at the Lodge. "Sir Thomas," she would say in her clear little voice, "come and walk;" and the old gentleman would get up and go out with her, and hold wonderful conversations, as we could see, looking after them from the window. Lady Denzil did not seem either to pet her, or to devote herself to her, as all the rest of the house did. But there was something in her face when she looked at the child which passes description. It was a sort of ineffable content and satisfaction, as if she had all that heart could desire and asked no more. Little Mary watched her eye whenever they were together with a curious sympathy more extraordinary still. She seemed to know by intuition when my lady wanted her. "'Es, my lady,' the child would say, watching with her sweet eyes. It was the only little divergence she made from correctness of speech, and somehow it pleased my ear. I suppose she said 'My lady' because Sir Thomas did, and that I liked too. To an old lady like Lady Denzil it is such a pretty title; I fell into it myself without being aware.

CHAPTER III.

THUS the world went softly on, till the roses of June had come instead of the spring crocuses. Everything went on softly at the Green. True, there was a tragedy now and then, even among us, like that sad affair of Everard Stoke; and sometimes a very troublesome complication, going near to break some hearts, like that of Nelly Fortis—but for the most part we were quiet enough. And that was a very quiet time. Little Mary had grown the pet of the Green before June. The little Damerels, who were nice children enough, were not to be compared with her; and then there were so many of them, whereas Mary was all alone like a little star. We all petted her—but she was one of the children whom it is impossible to spoil. She was never pert or disagreeable, like little Agatha Damerel. She had her little childish fits of temper by times, but was always sorry and always sweet, with her soft appealing eyes—a little woman, but never knowing or forward, like so many children now-a-days. She was still but a baby, poor darling, not more than seven years old, when that dreadful scene broke in upon our quietness which I have now to tell.

It was June, and there was a large party on the lawn before the Lodge. As long as the season lasted, while there were quantities of people in town, Lady Denzil often had these parties. We were all there of course; everybody on the Green whom she visited—and I used to be very sorry for Mrs. Wood and her daughters when one of them was going to take place). We were in the habit of meeting continually in the same way, to see the young people play croquet and amuse themselves; and there was perhaps a little monotony in it. But Lady Denzil always took

care to have some variety. There would be a fine lady or two from town, bringing with her a whiff of all the grandeurs and gaieties we had no particular share in, and setting an example to the girls in their dress and accessories. I never was extravagant in my dress, nor encouraged such a thing—indeed no *lady* ever does—but a real fashionable perfect toilette is generally so complete, and charming, and harmonious, that it is good for one to see it now and then, especially for girls, though of course ignorant persons and men don't understand why. And then there were a few gentlemen—with all the gossip of the clubs, and town talk, which made a very pleasant change to us. It was an unusually brilliant party that day. There was the young Countess of Berkhamstead, who was a great beauty and had married so strangely; people said the Earl was not very right in his head, and told the oddest stories about him. Poor thing, I fear she could not help herself—but she was the loveliest creature imaginable, and very nice then, though she went wrong afterwards. She sat by Lady Denzil's side on the sofa, which was placed just before the great bank of roses. It was pretty to see them together: the lovely young lady, with her fits of gaiety and pretty languid stillnesses, letting us all admire her as if she felt what a pleasure it was to us; and the lovely old lady, so serene, so fair, so kind. I don't know, for my part, which was the more beautiful. There were other fine ladies besides Lady Berkhamstead, and as I have just said, it was a very brilliant party. There never was a more glorious day: the sky was a delight to look at, and the rich full foliage of the trees clustered out against the blue, as if they leant caressing upon the soft air around them. The breath of the roses went everywhere, and behind Lady Denzil's sofa they threw themselves up into space—great globes of burning crimson, and delicate blush, and creamy white. They were very rich in roses at the Lodge—I remember one wall quite covered with the *Gloire de Dijon*—but that is a digression. It was a broad lawn, and left room for several sets of croquet-players, besides all the other people. The house was on a higher level at one side, the grounds and woods behind, and in front over the ha-ha we had a pretty glimpse of the Green, where cricket was being played, and the distant houses on the other side. It was like fairy-land, with just a peep of the outer world, by which we kept hold upon the fact that we were human, and must trudge away presently to our little houses. On the grass before Lady Denzil little Mary was sitting, a little white figure, with a brilliant picture-book which somebody had brought her. She was seated sideways, half facing to Lady Denzil, half to the house, and giving everybody from time to time a look from her tender eyes. Her white frock, which blazed in the sunshine, was the highest light in the picture, as a painter would have said, and gave it a kind of centre. I was not playing croquet, and there came a moment when I was doing nothing particular, and therefore had time to remark upon the scene around me. As I raised my eyes, my attention was all at once attracted by a strange figure, quite alien to the group below, which stood on the approach to the house.

The house, as I have said, was on a higher level, and consequently the road which approached it was higher too on the summit of the bank which sloped down towards the lawn. A woman stood above gazing at us. At first it seemed to me that she was one of the servants : she had a cotton gown on, and a straw bonnet, and a little black silk cloak. I could not say that she was shabby or wretched-looking, but her appearance was a strange contrast to the pretty crowd on the lawn. She seemed to have been arrested on her way to the door by the sound of voices, and stood there looking down upon us—a strange, tall, threatening figure, which awoke, I could not tell how, a certain terror in my mind. By degrees it seemed to me that her gaze fixed upon little Mary—and I felt more frightened still ; though what could any one have done to the child with so many anxious protectors looking on ? However, people were intent upon their games, or their talks, or their companions, and nobody saw her but myself. At last I got so alarmed that I left my seat to tell Sir Thomas of her. I had just made one step towards him, when all at once, with a strange cry, the woman darted down the bank. It was at little Mary she flew : she rushed down upon her like a tempest, and seized the child, crushing up her pretty white frock and her dear little figure violently in her arms. I cried out too in my fright—for I thought she was mad—and various people sprang from their chairs, one of the last to be roused being Lady Denzil, who was talking very earnestly to Lady Berkhamstead. The woman gave a great loud passionate outcry as she seized upon little Mary. And the child cried out too, one single word which in a moment transfixed me where I stood, and caught Lady Denzil's ear like the sound of a trumpet. It was a cry almost like a moan, full of terror, and dismay, and repugnance ; and yet it was one of the sweetest words that ever falls on human ears. The sound stopped everything, even the croquet, and called Sir Thomas forward from the other end of the lawn. The one word that Mary uttered, that filled us all with such horror and consternation, was “Mamma !”

“Yes, my darling,” cried the woman, holding her close, crumpling, even crushing her up in her arms. “They took you from me when I wasn't myself! Did I know where they were going to bring you ? Here ! Oh, yes, I see it all now. Don't touch my child!—don't interfere with my child!—she shan't stay here another day. Her father would curse her if he knew she was here.”

“Oh, please set me down,” said little Mary. “Oh, mamma, please don't hurt me. Oh, my lady !” cried the poor child, appealing to her protectress. Lady Denzil got up tottering as she heard this cry. She came forward with every particle of colour gone from her face. She was so agitated her lips could scarcely form the words ; but she had the courage to lay her hand upon the woman's arm,—

“Set her down,” she said. “If you have any claim—set her down—it shall be seen into. Sir Thomas——”

The stranger turned upon her. She was a woman about five-and-

'thirty, strong and bold and vigorous. I don't deny she was a handsome woman. She had big blazing black eyes, and a complexion perhaps a little heightened by her walk in the heat. She turned upon Lady Denzil, shaking off her hand, crushing little Mary still closer in one arm, and raising the other with a wild theatrical gesture.

" You ! " she cried ; " if I were to tell her father she was with you, he would curse her. How dare you look me in the face—a woman that's come after her child ! You that gave up your own flesh and blood. Ay ! You may stare at her, all you fine folks. There's the woman that sold her son to marry her master. She's got her grandeur, and all she bid for ; and she left her boy to be brought up in the streets, and go for a common soldier. And she's never set eyes on him, never since he was two years old ; and now she's come and stole my little Mary from me ! "

Before this speech was half spoken every soul in the place had crowded round to hear. No one thought how rude it was. Utter consternation was in everybody's look. As for Lady Denzil, she stood like a statue, as white as marble, in the same spot, hearing it all. She did not move. She was like an image set down there, capable of no individual action. She stood and gazed, and heard it all, and saw us all listening. I cannot tell what dreadful pangs were rending her heart ; but she stood like a dead woman in the sunshine, neither contradicting her accuser nor making even one gesture in her own defence.

Then Sir Thomas, on whom there had surely been some spell, came forward, dividing the crowd, and took the stranger by the arm. " Set down the child," he said, in a shaking voice. " Set her down. How dare you speak of a mother's rights ? Did you ever do anything for her ? Set down the child, woman. You have no business here."

" I never forsook my own flesh and blood," cried the enraged creature, letting poor little Mary almost fall down out of her arms, but keeping fast hold of her. " I've a better right here than any of these strangers. I'm her son's wife. She's little Mary's grandmother, though she'll deny it. She's that kind of woman that would deny it to her last breath. I know she would. She's the child's grandmother. She's my mother-in-law. She's never seen her son since he was two years old. If he hears the very name of mother he curses and swears. Let me alone, I have come for my child ! And I've come to give that woman her due ! "

" Go ! " cried Sir Thomas. His voice was awful. He would not touch her, for he was a gentleman ; but the sound of his voice made my very knees bend and tremble. " Go ! " he said—" not a word more." He was so overcome at last that he put his hand on her shoulder and pushed her away, and wildly beckoned to the servants, who were standing listening too. The woman grasped little Mary by her dress. She crushed up the child's pretty white cape in her hot hand and dragged her along with her. But she obeyed. She dared not resist his voice ; and she had done all the harm it was possible to do.

" I'll go," she said. " None of you had better touch me. I'm twice

as strong as you, though you're a man. But I'll go. She knows what I think of her now ; and you all know what she is," she cried, raising her voice. " To marry that old man, she deserted her child at two years old, and never set eyes on him more. That's Lady Denzil. Now you all know, ladies and gentlemen ; and I'll go."

All this time Lady Denzil never stirred ; but when the woman moved away, dragging little Mary with her, all at once my lady stretched out her hands and gave a wild cry. " The child ! " she cried ; " the child ! " And then the little thing turned to her with that strange sympathy we had all noticed. I don't know how she twitched herself out of her mother's excited, passionate grasp, but she rushed back and threw herself at Lady Denzil's feet, and clutched hold of her dress. My lady, who had not moved nor spoken except those two words—who was old and capable of no such exertion, stooped over her and lifted her up. I never saw such a sight. She was as pale as if she had been dead. She had received such a shock as might well have killed her. Notwithstanding, this is what she did. She lifted up the child in her arms, broke away from us who were surrounding, mounted the steep bank like a girl, with her treasure clasped close to her bosom, and before any one knew, before there was time to speak, or even almost think, had disappeared with her into the house. The woman would have rushed at her, sprung upon her, if she had not been held fast. It may easily be imagined what a scene it was when the mistress of the feast disappeared, and a family secret so extraordinary was thus tossed to public discussion. The house door rang after Lady Denzil, as she rushed in, with a sound like a cannon shot. The stranger stood struggling in the midst of a group of men, visitors and servants, some of whom were trying to persuade, some to force her away. Sir Thomas stood by himself, with his old pale hands piteously clasped together, and his head bent. He was overwhelmed by shame and trouble, and the shock of this frightful scene. He did not seem able for the first moment to face any one, to lift his eyes to the disturbed and fluttering crowd, who were so strangely in the way. And we all stood about thunderstruck, staring in each other's faces, not knowing what to do or to say. Lady Berkhamstead, with the instinct of a great lady, was the first to recover herself. She turned to me, I scarcely know why, nor could she have told why. " I know my carriage is waiting," she said, " and I could not think of disturbing dear Lady Denzil to say good-by. Will you tell her how sorry I am to go away without seeing her ? " They all came crowding round me with almost the same words, as soon as she had set the example. And presently Sir Thomas roused up, as it were, from his stupor. And for the next few minutes there was nothing but shaking of hands, and the rolling up of carriages, and an attempt on the part of everybody to smile and look as if nothing had happened. " So long as it does not make dear Lady Denzil ill," one of the ladies said. " It is so disagreeable to be so close upon the road. It might have happened to any of us," said another. " Of course the creature is mad ;

she should be shut up somewhere." They said such words with the natural impulse of saying anything to break the terrible impression of the scene; but they were all almost as much shocked and shaken as the principals in it. I never saw such a collection of pale faces as those that went from the Lodge that afternoon. I was left last of all. Somehow the woman who had made so dreadful a disturbance had disappeared without anybody knowing where. Sir Thomas and I were left alone on the lawn, which ten minutes ago—I don't think it was longer—had been so gay and so crowded. So far as I was myself concerned, that was the most trying moment of all. Everybody had spoken to me as if I belonged to the house, but in reality I did not belong to the house; and I felt like a spy as I stood with Sir Thomas all alone. And what was worse, he felt it too, and looked at me with the forced painful smile he had put on for the others, as if he felt I was just like them, and it was also needful for me.

"I beg your pardon for staying," I said; "don't you think I could be of any use? Lady Denzil perhaps——"

Sir Thomas took my hand and shook it in an imperative way. "No, no," he said with his set smile. He even turned me towards the gate and touched my shoulder with his agitated hand—half (no doubt) because he knew I meant kindly—but half to send me away.

"She might like me to do something," I said piteously. But all that Sir Thomas did was to wring my hand and pat my shoulder, and say, "No, no." I was obliged to follow the rest with an aching heart. As I went out one of the servants came after me. It was a man who had been long in the family, and knew a great deal about the Denzils. He came to tell me he was very much frightened about the woman, who had disappeared nobody could tell how. "I'm afraid she's hiding about somewhere," he said, "to come again." And then he glanced round to see that nobody was by, and looked into my face. "All that about my lady is true," he said—"true as gospel. I've knowed it this forty years."

"They've been very kind to you, Wellman," I said indignantly—"for shame! to think you should turn upon your good mistress now."

"Turn upon her!" said Wellman; "not if I was to be torn in bits; but being such a friend of the family, I thought it might be a satisfaction to you, ma'am, to know as it was true."

If anything could have made my heart more heavy I think it would have been that. He thought it would be a satisfaction to me to know. And after the first moment of pity was past, were there not some people to whom it would be a satisfaction to know? who would tell it all over and gloat upon it, and say to each other that pride went before a fall? My heart was almost bursting as I crossed the Green in the blazing afternoon sunshine, and saw the cricketers still playing as if nothing had happened. Ah me! was this what brought such sad indulgent experience to Lady Denzil's eyes—was this what made her know by instinct when anything was wrong in a house? I could not think at first what a terrible accusation

it was that had been brought against her. I thought only of her look, of her desperate snatch at the child, of her rush up the steep bank with little Mary in her arms. She could scarcely have lifted the child under ordinary circumstances—what wild despair, what longing must have stimulated her to such an effort! I put down my veil to cover my tears. Dear Lady Denzil! how sweet she was, how tender, how considerate of everybody. Blame never crossed her lips. I cannot describe the poignant aching sense of her suffering that grew upon me till I reached my own house. When I was there, out of sight of everybody, I sat down and cried bitterly. And then gradually, by degrees it broke upon me what it was that had happened—what the misery was, and the shame.

She must have done it forty years ago, as Wellman said, when she was quite young, and no doubt ignorant of the awful thing she was doing. She had done it, and she had held by it ever since—had given her child up at two years old, and had never seen him again. Good Lord! could any woman do that and live? Her child, two years old. My mind seemed to grow bewildered going over and over that fact—evidently it was a fact. Her child—her own son.

And for forty years! To keep it all up and stand by it, and never to flinch or falter. If it is difficult to keep to a good purpose for so long, what can it be to keep by an evil one? How could she do it? Then a hundred little words she had said came rushing into my mind. And that look—the look she cast after the deserter on the road? I understood it all now. Her heart had been longing for him all the time. She had loved her child more than other mothers love, every day of all that time.

Poor Lady Denzil! dear Lady Denzil! this was the end of all my reasonings on the matter. I went over it again and again, but I never came to any ending but this:—The thing was dreadful; but she was not dreadful. There was no change in her. I did not realize any guilt on her part. My heart only bled for the long anguish she had suffered, and for the shock she was suffering from now.

But before evening on this very same day my house was filled with people discussing the whole story. No one had heard any more than I had heard; but by this time a thousand versions of the story were afloat. Some people said she had gone astray when she was young, and had been cast off by her family, and that Sir Thomas had rescued her; and there were whispers that such stories were not so rare, if we knew all: a vile echo that always breathes after a real tragedy. And some said she was of no family, but had been the former Lady Denzil's maid; some thought it was Sir Thomas's own son that had been thus cast away; some said he had been left on the streets and no provision made for him. My neighbours went into a hundred details. Old Mr. Clifford thought it was a bad story indeed; and the Rector shook his head, and said that for a person in Lady Denzil's position such a scandal was dreadful; it was such an example to the lower classes. Mrs. Damerel was still more depressed. She

said she would not be surprised at anything Molly Jackson could do after this. As for Mrs. Wood, who came late in the evening, all agape, to inquire into the news, with something like a malicious satisfaction in her face, I lost all patience when she appeared. I had compelled myself to bear what the others said, but I would not put up with her.

"Lady Denzil is my dear friend," I broke out, not without tears; "a great trouble has come upon her. A madwoman has been brought against her with an incredible story; and when a story is incredible people always believe it. If you want to hear any more, go to other people who were present. I can't tell you anything, and if I must say so, I won't."

"Good gracious, Mrs. Mulgrave, don't go out of your senses!" said my visitor. "If Lady Denzil has done something dreadful, that does not affect you?"

"But it does affect me," I said, "infinitely; it clouds over heaven and earth; it changes—Never mind; I cannot tell you anything about it. If you are anxious to hear, you must go to some one else than me."

"Well, I am very glad I was not there," said Mrs. Wood, "with my innocent girls. I am very glad now I never made any attempt to make friends with her, though you know how often you urged me to do it. I am quite happy to think I did not yield to you now."

I had no spirit to contradict this monstrous piece of pretence. I was glad to get rid of her anyhow; for though I might feel myself for an instant supported by my indignation, the blow had gone to my heart, and I had no strength to struggle against it. The thought of all that Lady Denzil might be suffering confused me with a dull sense of pain. And yet things were not then at their worst with my lady. Next morning it was found that little Mary had been stolen away.

CHAPTER IV.

THAT was a dreadful morning on the Green. After the lovely weather we had been having, all the winds and all the fiends seemed to have been unchained. It blew a hurricane during the night, and next day the Green was covered with great branches of trees which had been torn off and scattered about like wreck on a seashore. After this came rain; it poured as if the windows of heaven were open, when Sir Thomas himself stepped in upon me like a ghost, as I sat at my solitary breakfast. Those twenty-four hours had passed over him like so many years. He was haggard and ashy pale, and feeble. His very mind seemed to be confused. "We have lost the child," he said to me, with a voice from which all modulation and softness had gone. "Will you come and see my wife?"

"Lost! Little Mary?" I cried.

And then all his courage gave way; he sat down speechless, with his lips quivering, and bitter tears in his worn old eyes. Then he got

up restless and shaking. "Come to my wife," he said. There was not another word exchanged between us. I put on my cloak with the hood over my head, and went with him on the moment. As we crossed the Green a sort of procession arrived, two or three great vans packed with people, with music and flags, which proceeded to discharge their contents at the "Barley-Mow" under the soaking rain. They had come for a day's pleasure, poor creatures, and this was the sort of day they got. The sight of them is so associated in my mind with that miserable moment, that I don't think I could forget it were I to live a hundred years. It seemed to join on somehow to the tragical breaking-up of the party on the day before. This was nothing but the external elements ; but it chimed in with its little sermon on the vanity of all things. My lady was in her own room when I entered the Lodge. The shock had struck her down as I found, but she was not calm enough, or weak enough to go to bed. She lay on a sofa in her dressing-gown ; she was utterly pale, not a touch of her sweet colour left, and her hands shook as she held them out to me. She held them out, and looked up in my face with appealing eyes, which put me in mind of little Mary's. And then, when I stooped down over her in the impulse of the moment to kiss her, she pressed my hands so in hers, that frail and thin as her fingers were, I almost cried out with pain. Mrs. Florentine, her old maid, stood close by the head of her mistress's sofa. She stood looking on very grave and steady, without any surprise, as if she knew it all.

For a few minutes Lady Denzil could not speak. And when she did, her words came out with a burst, all at once. "Did he tell you ?" she said. "I thought you would help me. You have nobody to keep you back ; neither husband nor—— I said I was sure of you."

"Dear Lady Denzil," I said, "if I can do anything, to the utmost of my strength——"

She held my hand fast, and looked at me as if she would look me through and through. "That was what I said—that was what I said !" she cried ; "you can do what your heart says ; you can bring her back to me ; my child, my little child ! I never had but a little child—never that I knew ! "

"I will do whatever you tell me," I said, trying to soothe her ; "but oh ! don't wear yourself out. You will be ill if you give way."

I said this, I suppose, because everybody says it when any one is in trouble. I don't know any better reason. "That's what I'm always telling my lady, ma'am," said Mrs. Florentine ; "but she pays no heed to me."

Lady Denzil gave us both a faint little smile. She knew too much not to know how entirely a matter of conventional routine it was that we should say this to her. She made a pause, and then she took my hand once more.

"I ought to tell you," she said—"it is all true—every word. Floren-

the knows everything; from the first to the last. I was a poor soldier's

widow, and I was destitute. I was too young to know what I was doing, and I was pretty, they said, and there were men that would have taken advantage of my simplicity. But Sir Thomas was never like that. I married him to buy a livelihood for my child—and then he was very good to me. When he married me, I was a forlorn young creature, with nothing to give my helpless baby. I gave up my child, Florentine knows; and yet every day, every year of his life, I've followed him in my heart. If he had been living in my sight, I could not have known more of him. What I say is every word true, Florentine will tell you. I want you," grasping my hand tightly, "to tell everything to *him*."

"To him!" said I, with a gasp of astonishment, not knowing what she meant.

"Yes," said Lady Denzil, holding my hand fast, "to my boy—I want you to see my boy. Tell him there has never been a day I have not followed him in my heart. All his wilfulness I have felt was my fault. I have prayed God on my knees to lay the blame on me. That day when I saw the deserter—I want you to tell him everything. I want you to ask him to give me back the child."

I gave a cry of astonishment; an exclamation which I could not resist. "Can you expect it?" I said.

"Ah yes, I expect it," said Lady Denzil; "not that I have any right—I expect it from his heart. Florentine will tell you everything. It is she who has watched over him. We never talked of anything else, she and I; never a day all these forty years but I have figured to myself what my darling was doing; I say my darling," she cried as with a sharp pang, with a sudden gush of tears; "and he is a man and a soldier, and in prison. Think of that, and think of all I have had to bear!"

I could not make any answer. I could only press her hand with a dumb sympathy. As for Mrs. Florentine, she stood with her eyes cast down, and smoothed the chintz cover with her hand, taking no part in look or word. The story was no surprise to her. She knew everything about it; she was a chief actor in it; she had no need to show any sympathy. The union between her mistress and herself was deeper than that.

"When he married this woman, I was ready to believe it would be for his good," said my lady, when she had recovered herself. "I thought it was somehow giving him back what I had taken from him. I sent her presents secretly. He has been very, very wilful; and Sir Thomas was so good to him! He took his mother from him; but he gave him money, education, everything a young man wants. There are many young men," said Lady Denzil, pathetically, "who think but little of their mothers,"—and then she made a pause. "There was young Clifford, for example," she added, "and the Rector's brother who ran away—their mothers broke their hearts, but the boys did not care much. I have suffered in everything he snuffed by; but yet if he had been here, perhaps he would not have cared for me."

"That is not possible," I said, not seeing what she meant.

"Oh, it is possible, very possible," she said. "I have seen it times without number. I have tried to take a little comfort from it. If it had been a girl, I would never, never have given her up; but a boy——That was what I thought. I don't defend myself. Let him be the judge—I want him to be the judge. That woman is a wicked woman; she has disgraced him and left him; she will bring my child up to ruin. Ask him to give me back my poor little child."

"I will do what I can," I said, faltering. I was plodged; yet how was I to do it? My courage failed me, as I sat by her dismayed and received my commission. When she heard the tremulous sound of my voice, she turned round to me and held my hand close in hers once more.

"You can do everything," she said. Her voice had suddenly grown hoarse. She was at such a supreme height of emotion, that the sight of her frightened me. I kissed her; I soothed her; I promised to do whatever she would. And then she became impatient that I should set out. She was not aware of the rain or the storm. She was too much absorbed in herself even to hear the furious wail of the wind and the blast of rain against the windows. I believe she would have done as much for me. Before Florentine followed me with my cloak, I had made up my mind not to lose any more time. It was from her I got all the details: the poor fellow's name, and where he was, and all about him. He had been very wild, Florentine said. Sir Thomas had done everything for him; but he had not been grateful, and he had been very wild. His wife was an abandoned woman, wicked and shameless; and he too had taken to evil courses. He had strained Sir Thomas's patience to the utmost time after time. And then he had enlisted. His regiment was in the Tower, and he was under confinement there for insubordination. Such was the brief story. "Many a time I've thought, ma'am," said Mrs. Florentine, "if my lady did but know him as she was abreaking of her heart for! If he'd been at home, he'd have killed her. But all she knows is that he's her child,—to love, and nothing more."

"The Tower is a long way from our railway," I said; "but it does not much matter in a cab."

"Law, ma'am, you're never agoing to-day?" said Florentine. But I had no intention of arguing the question with her. I went into the library to Sir Thomas to bid him good-by. And he too was amazed when I told him. He took my hand as his wife had done, and shook it, and looked pitifully into my face. "It is I whe ought to go," he said. But he knew as well as I did that it was impossible for him to go. He ordered the carriage to come round for me, and brought me wine—some wonderful old wine he had in his cellar, which I knew no difference in from the commonest sherry. But it pleased him, I suppose, to think he had given me his best. And before I went away, he gave me much more information about the unfortunate man I was going to see. "He is not bad at heart," said Sir Thomas; "I don't think he is bad at heart; but

his wife is a wicked woman." And when I was going away, he stooped his grey aged countenance over me, and kissed me solemnly on the forehead. When I found myself driving along the wet roads, with the rain swooping so in the horses' faces that it was all the half-blinded coachman could do to keep them going against the wind, I was so bewildered by my own position that I felt stupid for the moment. I was going to the Tower, to see Sergeant Gray, in confinement for disrespect to his superior officer —going to persuade him to exert himself to take his child from his wife's custody, and give her to his mother, whom he did not know. I had not even heard how it was that little Mary had been stolen away. I had taken that for granted, in face of the immediate call upon me. I had indeed been swept up, as it were, by the strong wind of emotion, and carried away, and thrust forward into a position I could not understand. Then I recognized the truth of Lady Denzil's words. I had nobody to restrain me: no husband at home to find fault with anything I might do; nobody to wonder, or fret, or be annoyed by the burden I had taken upon me. The recollection made my heart swell a little, not with pleasure. And yet it was very true. Poor Mr. Mulgrave, had he been living, was a man who would have been sure to find fault. It is dreary to think of oneself as of so little importance to any one; but, perhaps, one ought to think more than one does, that if the position is a dreary one, it has its benefits too. One is free to do what one pleases,—I could answer to myself; I had no one else to answer to. At such a moment there was an advantage in that.

At the station I met the Rector, who was going to town by the same train. "Bless my soul, Mrs. Mulgrave," he said, "what a dreadful day you have chosen for travelling. I thought there was no one afloat on the world but me."

"There was no choice, Mr. Damerel," I said. "I am going about business which cannot be put off."

He was very kind: he got my ticket for me, and put me into a carriage, and did not insist that I should talk to him on the way up. He talked enough himself it is true, but he was satisfied when I said yes and no. Just before we got to town, however, he returned to my errand. "If your business is anything I can do for you," he said; "if there is anything that a man could look after better than a lady, you know how glad I should be to be of any use."

"Thank you," I said. My feelings were not mirthful, but yet I could have burst out laughing. I wonder if there is really any business that a man can do better than a lady, when it happens to be *her* business and not his? I have never got much help in that way from the men that have belonged to me. And to think of putting my delicate, desperate business in Mr. Damerel's soft, clerical hands, that had no bone in them! He got me a cab, which was something—though to be sure a porter would have done it quite as well—and opened his eyes to their utmost width when he heard me tell the coachman to go to the Tower.

What a drive it was! our thirty miles of railway was nothing to it: through all those damp, dreary, glistening London streets—streets narrow and drearily vicious—streets still more drearily respectable; desert lines of warehouses and offices—crowded thoroughfares with dreary vehicles in a lock, and dreary people crowding about surmounted with umbrellas—miles upon miles, streets upon streets, from Paddington to the Tower. I think it was the first drive of the kind I ever took, and if you can suppose me wrapped up in my waterproof cloak, a little excited about the unknown man I was going to see; trying to form my sentences, what I was to say; pondering how I should bring in my arguments best; wondering where I should have to go to find the mother and the child. Poor little Mary! after the little gleam of love and of luxury that had opened upon her, to be snatched off into the dreary world of poverty, with a violent mother whom it was evident she feared! And poor mother too! She might be violent and yet might love her child; she might be wicked and yet might love her child. To go and snatch the little creature back, at all hazards, was an act which to the popular mind would always look like a much higher strain of virtue than dear Lady Denzil's abandonment. I could not defend Lady Denzil, even to myself; and what could I say for her to her son, who knew her not?

At least an hour was lost before I got admittance to Sergeant Gray. As it happened, by a fortunate chance, Robert Scymour was colonel of the regiment, and came to my assistance. But for that I might have failed altogether. Robert was greatly amazed by the request I made him, but of course he did what I wanted. He told me Sergeant Gray was not in prison, but simply confined to his quarters, and that he was a very strange sort of man. "I should like to know what you can want with him," he said. "Yes, of course, I am dreadfully curious—men are—you know it is our weakness. You may as well tell me what you want with Gray."

"It is nothing to laugh about," said I; "it is more tragic than comical. I have a message to him from his mother. And there is not a moment to lose."

"I understand," said Robert, "I am to take myself off. Here is the door; but you must tell me anything you know about him when you have seen him. He is the strangest fellow in the regiment. I never can make him out."

And in two minutes more I was face to face with Sergeant Gray.

He must have been like his father. There was not a feature in his face which recalled Lady Denzil's. He was an immensely tall, powerful man, with strong chestnut brown hair, and vigour and life in every line of his great frame. I expected to find a prisoner partially sentimental; and I found a big man in undress, marching freely about his room, with a long pipe by the fire, and his beer and glasses on the table. I had expected a refined man, bearing traces of gentleman written on him, and the fine tastes that became Lady Denzil's son. There was something about him, when one came to look at him a second time—but what was it?

Traces of dissipation, a look of bravado, an instant standing to his arms in self-defence, whatever I might have come to accuse him of; and the insufferable coxcomb air which comes naturally to the meanest member of the household troops. Such was the rapid impression I formed as I went in. He took off his cap with an air of amazement yet assurance, but put it on again immediately. I stood trembling before this big, irreverent, unknown man. If the door had been open I think I should have run away. But as it was I had no resource.

"Mr. Gray," I said all at once, half from cowardice, half to get it over, "I have come to you from your mother."

The man actually staggered as he stood before me—he fell back and gazed at me as if I had been a ghost. "From my mother?" he said, and his lips seemed to refuse articulation. His surprise vanquished him; which was more than with my individual forces I could have hoped to do.

"From your mother," I repeated. "I have come direct from her, where she is lying ill and much shaken. She has told me all her story,—and I love her dearly—that is why she sent me to you."

All the time I was speaking he still stood and stared at me; but when I stopped, he appeared gradually to come to himself. He brought forward, from where it stood against the wall, very deliberately, another chair, and sitting down, looked at me intently. "If she has told you all her story," he said, "you will know how little inducement I have to listen to anything she may say."

"Yes," said I, feeling not a fictitious but a real passion swelling up into my throat, "she has told me everything, more than you can know. She has told me how for forty years—is it forty years? she has watched over you in secret, spent her days in thinking of you, and her nights in praying for you. Ah, don't smile! if you had seen her pale and broken in all her pride, lying trembling and telling me this, it would have touched your heart."

And I could see that it did touch his heart, being so new and unusual to him. He was not a cynical, over-educated man, accustomed to such appeals, and to believe them nonsense. And it touched him, being so unexpected. Then he made a little effort to recover himself and the natural bravado of his character and profession. "In all her pride!" he said bitterly. "Yes, that's very well said; she liked her pride better than me."

"She liked your life better than you," said I,—and heaven forgive me if I spoke like a sophist,—"and your comfort. To secure bread to you and education, she made that vow. When she had once made it, she had to keep it. But I tell you what she told me not three hours ago. 'There has never been a day I have not followed him in my heart.' That is what she said. She and her old maid who used to see you and watch over you, talked of nothing else. Fancy! you a young man growing up, taking your own way, going against the wishes of your best friends; and your mother, who dared not go to you, watching you from far off, weeping

over you, praying on her knees, thinking of nothing else, talking of nothing else when she was alone and dared do it. At other times she had to go into the world to please her husband, to act as if you had no existence. And all the time she was thinking of nothing but you in her heart."

He had got up before I came so far. He was unquestionably moved; his step got quicker and quicker. He made impatient gestures with his hands as if to put my voice away. But all the same he listened to me greedily. When I had done—and I got so excited that I was compelled to be done, for tears came into my throat and choked me—he turned to me with his face strongly swept by winds of feeling. "Who told you?" he cried abruptly. "Why do you come to disturb me? I was thinking nothing about my circumstances. I was thinking how I could best be jolly in such a position. What do I know about anybody who may choose to call herself my mother? Probably I never had a mother. I can do nothing for her, and she can do nothing for me."

"You can do something for her," I cried. "She sent me to you to beg it of you. Sir Thomas saw how your wife was living. He saw she should not have a little girl to ruin. He brought away the child. I was there when he came home. Your mother knew in a moment who it was, though he never said a word. She rushed to her, and fell on her knees, and cried as if her heart would break. She thought God had sent the child. Little Mary is so like her, so like her! You cannot think how beautiful it was to see them together. Look! if you don't know what your mother is, look at that face."

He had stood as if stupefied, staring at me. When I mentioned his wife he had made an angry gesture; but his heart melted altogether when I came to little Mary. I had brought Lady Denzil's photograph with me, thinking it might touch his heart, and now I thrust it into his hand before he knew what I meant. He gave one glance at it, and then he fell back into his chair, and gazed and gazed, as if he had lost himself. He was not prepared. He had been wilful—perhaps wicked—but his heart had not got hardened like that of a man of the world. It had been outside evils he had done, outside influences that had moved him. When anything struck deep at his heart he had no armour to resist the blow. He went back upon his chair with a stride, hiding from me, or trying to hide, that he was obliged to do it to keep himself steady; he knitted his brows over the little picture as if it was hard to see it. But he might have spared himself the trouble. I saw how it was. One does not live in the world and learn men's ways for nought. I knew his eyes were filling with tears; I knew that sob was climbing up into his throat; and I did not say a word more. It was a lovely little photograph. The sun is often so kind to old women. It was my lady with all the softness of her white hair, with her gracious looks, her indulgent, benign eyes. And those eyes were little Mary's eyes. They went straight into the poor fellow's heart. After he had struggled as long as he could, the sob actually broke out.

Then he straightened himself up all at once, and looked at me fiercely ; but I knew better than to pretend to hear him.

" This is nothing to the purpose," he said ; and then he stopped, and nature burst forth. " Why did she cast me upon the world ? Why did she give me up ? You are a good woman, and you are her friend. Why did she cast me away ? "

I shook my head, it was all I could do. I was crying, and I could not articulate. " God knows ! " I gasped through my tears. And he got up and went to the window, and turning his back on me, held it up to the light. I watched no longer what he was doing. Nature was working her own way in his heart.

When he came back at last, he came up to me and held out his hand. " Thank you," he said, in a way that, for the first time, reminded me of Lady Denzil. " You have made me think less harshly about my mother. What is it she wants me to do ? "

He did not put down the photograph, or give it back to me, but held it closely in his hand, which gave me courage. And then I told him all the story. When I told him how his wife had insulted his mother, his face grew purple. I gave him every detail : how little Mary clung to my lady ; how frightened she was for the passionate claimant who seized her. When I repeated her little cry, " My lady ! " a curious gleam passed over his face. He interrupted me at that point. " Who is my lady ? " he said, with a strange consciousness. The only answer I made was to point at the photograph. It made the most curious impression on him. Evidently he had not even known his mother's name. Almost, I think, the title threw a new light for him upon all the circumstances. There are people who will say that this was from a mean feeling ; but it was from no mean feeling. He saw by this fact what a gulf she had put between herself and him. He saw a certain reason in the separation which, if she had been a woman of different position, could not have existed. And there is no man living who is not susceptible to the world's opinion of the people he is interested in. He changed almost imperceptibly—unawares. He heard all my story in grave silence. I told him what my lady had said,—that he was to be the judge ; and henceforward it was with the seriousness of a judge that he sat and listened. He heard me out every word, and then he sat and seemed to turn it over in his mind. So far as I was concerned, that was the hardest moment of all. His face was stern in its composure. He was reflecting, putting this and that together. His mother was standing at the bar before him. And what should I do, did he decide against her ? Thus I sat waiting and trembling. When he opened his lips my heart jumped to my mouth. How foolish it was ! That was not what he had been thinking of. Instead of his mother at the bar, it was his own life he had been turning over in his mind. It all came forth with a burst when he began to speak : the chances he had lost ; the misery that had come upon him ; the shame of the woman who bore his name ; and his poor little desolate child. Then the man forgot himself, and swore a great

oath. "As soon as I am free I will go and get her, and send her to——my lady!" he said, with abrupt, half-hysterical vehemence. And then he rose suddenly and went to the window, and turned his back on me again.

I was overcome. I did not expect it so soon, or so fully. I could have thrown myself upon his neck, poor fellow, and wept. Was he the one to bear the penalties of all? sinned against by his mother in his childhood, and more dreadfully by his wife in his maturity. What had he done, that the closest of earthly ties should thus be made a torment to him? When I had come to myself I rose and went after him, trembling. "Mr. Gray," I said, "is there nothing that can be done for you?"

"I don't want anything to be done for me," he cried, abruptly. The question piqued his pride. "Tell her she shall see yet that I understand the sacrifice she has made," he said. If he spoke ironically or in honesty I cannot tell; when his mouth had once been opened the stream came so fast. "I want to go away, that is all," he said, with a certain heat, almost anger; "anywhere—I don't care where—to the Mauritius, if they like, were that fever is. No fear that I should die. I have been brought up like a gentleman—it is quite true. And yet I am here. What was the use? My father was a common soldier. She—— But it's no good talking; I am no credit to anybody now. If I could get drafted into another regiment, and go—to India or anywhere—you should see a difference. I swear you should see a difference!" his voice rose high in those last words; then he paused. "But she is old," he said, sinking his voice; "ten years—I couldn't do in less than ten years. She'll never be living then, to see what a man can do."

"She is a woman that would make shift to live, somehow, to see her son come back," I cried. "Give her little Mary, and try."

"She shall have little Mary, by God!" cried the excited man; and then he broke down, and wept. I cannot describe this scene any more. I left him, clasping his hands, feeling as if he was my brother; and he had his mother's picture held fast and hidden in his other hand. If that dear touch of natural love had come to him before! But God knows! perhaps he was only ready and open to it then.

But he could not tell me where to seek the child. I had to be content with his promise that when he was free he would restore her to us. I went out from him as much shaken as if I had gone through an illness, and stole out, not to see Robert Seymour, whom I was not equal to meeting just at that moment. But the end of my mission was nearer than I thought. When I got outside there was a group of excited people about the gateway; close to which my cab was waiting me. They were discussing something which had just happened, and which evidently had left a great commotion behind. Among the crowd was a group of soldiers' wives, who shook their heads, and talked it over to each other with lowered voices. "It's well for her she was took bad here, and never got nigh to him," one of them said. "He'd have killed her, I know he

would. It's well for her she never got in to tempt that man to her death."

"It was brazen of her to come nigh him at all," said another, "and him so proud. She always was a shameless one. What my heart bleeds for is that poor little child."

"Where is the child?" asked a third. "It would be well for her, poor innocent, if the Lord was to take her too."

I was standing stupefied, listening to them, when I heard a little cry, and the grasp of something at my dress. The cry was so feeble, and the grasp so light, that I might never have noticed it but for those women. I turned round, and the whole world swam round me for a moment. I did what Lady Denzil did—I staggered forward and fell on my knees, though this was not the soft green grass, but a stony London pavement, and clasped little Mary tight, with a vehemence that would have frightened any other child; but she was not frightened. The little creature was drenched with the pitiless rain. She had been tied up in an old shawl, to hide the miserable, pretty white frock, now clogged with mud and soaked with water. Her little hat was glued to her head with the floods to which she had been exposed. I lifted my treasure wildly in my arms, as soon as I had any strength to do it, and rushed with her to my carriage. I felt like a thief triumphant; and yet it was no theft. But my eagerness aroused the suspicions of the soldiers' wives who had been standing by. They explained to me that the child was Sergeant Gray's child; that her mother had been took very bad in a fit, and had been carried off to the hospital; and that I, a stranger, had no right to interfere. I don't know what hurried explanation I made to them; but I know that at last I satisfied their fears, and with little Mary in my arms actually drove away.

It was true, though I never could believe it. I got her as easily as if it had been the most natural thing in the world. I could not believe it, even when I held her fast and drew from her her little story. She had been taken away early, very early in the morning, when she ran to the door as soon as she was up to satisfy herself that it rained. No doubt the wretched mother had hung about the grounds all night in the storm and rain to get at the child. She had snatched up little Mary in her arms, and rushed out with her before any one was aware. The child had been dragged along the dreary roads in the rain. If the woman had really loved her, if it had been the passion of a tender mother, and not of a revengeful creature, she never would have subjected the child to this. She was wet to the skin, with pools in her little boots, and the water streaming from her dress. I took her to a friend's house and got dry clothes to put upon her. The unhappy mother had, no doubt, been out all night exposed to the storm. She was mad with rage and misery and fatigue, and probably did not feel her danger at the moment; but just as she reached the Tower to claim, building upon a common opposition to one object, her husband's support, had fallen down senseless, on his very threshold as it were. Nothing, indeed, but madness could have led her to

the man whom she had disgraced. When the surrounding bystanders saw that nothing was to be done for her, and that she would not come out of her faint, they had her carried in alarm to the hospital. Such was the abrupt conclusion of the tale. Had I known I need not have given myself the trouble of seeing Sergeant Gray—but that, at least, was a thing which I could not find in my heart to regret.

When I took her back Lady Denzil held me in her arms, held me fast, and looked into my face, even before she listened to little Mary's call. She wanted me to tell her of her child—her own child—and I was so weak that I could not speak to her. I fell crying on her tender old bosom, like a fool, and had to be comforted, as if it could be anything to me—in comparison. I don't know afterwards what I said to her, but she understood all I meant. As for Sir Thomas he was too happy to ask any questions. The child had wound herself into his very heart. He sat with little Mary in his arms all that evening. He would scarcely allow her to be taken to bed. He went up with his heavy old step to see her sleeping safe once more under his roof, and made Wellman, with a pistol, sleep in a little room below. But little Mary was safe enough now. Her father was confined in his barrack-room, with my lady's photograph in his hands, and a host of unknown softenings and compunctions in his heart. Her mother was raving wildly in the hospital on the bed from which she was never to rise. I don't know that any one concerned, except myself, thought of this strange cluster of divers fortunes, of tragic misery and suffering, all hanging about the little angel-vision of that child. Sin, shame, misery, every kind of horror and distress, and little Mary the centre of all; how strange it was!—how terrible and smiling and wretched is life!

It is not to be supposed that such a frightful convulsion and earthquake could pass over and leave no sign. Little Mary was very ill after her exposure, and the shadow of death fell on the Lodge. Perhaps that circumstance softened a little the storm of animadversion that rose up in the neighbourhood. For six months after, Lady Denzil, who had been our centre of society, was never seen out of her own gates. Then they went away, and were absent a whole year. It was the most curious change to everybody on the Green. For three months no one talked on any other subject, and the wildest stories were told: stories with just so much truth in them as to make them doubly wild. It was found out somehow that that wretched woman had died, and then there were accounts current that she had died in the grounds at the Lodge—on the road—in the work-house—everywhere but the real place, which was in the hospital, where every indulgence and every comfort that she was capable of receiving had been given to her, Sir Thomas himself going to town on purpose to see that it was so. And then it was said that it was she who was Lady Denzil's child. It was a terrible moment, and one which left its mark upon everybody concerned. Sergeant Gray lost his rank, but got his wish and was drafted into another regiment going to India. I saw him again, I and

poor old Mrs. Florentine. But he did not see his mother. They were neither of them able for such a trial. "I will come back in ten years," he said to me. I do not know if he will. I don't know if Lady Denzil will live so long. But I believe if she does for the first time she will see her son.

They returned to the Lodge two years ago, and the neighbourhood now, instead of gossiping, is very curious to know whether Lady Denzil ever means to go into society again. Everybody calls, and admires little Mary—how she has grown, and what a charming little princess she is; and they all remind my Lady, with tender reproach, of those parties they enjoyed so much. "Are we never to have any more, dear Lady Denzil?" Lucy Stoke asked the other day, kneeling at my lady's side, and caressing her soft old ivory-white hand. My lady—to whom her tender old beauty, her understanding of everybody's trouble, even the rose-tint in her cheek, have come back again—made no answer, but only kissed pretty Lucy. I don't know if she will give any more parties; but she means to live the ten years.

As for Sir Thomas he was never so happy in his life before. He follows little Mary about like an old grey tender knight worshipping the fairy creature. Sometimes I look on and cannot believe my eyes. The wretched guilty mother is dead long ago, and nobody remembers her very existence. The poor soldier has worked himself up to a commission, and may be high in rank before he comes back. If Lady Denzil had been the most tender and devoted of mothers, could things have turned out better? Is this world all a phantasmagoria and chaos of dreams and chances? One's brain reels when Providence thus contradicts all the laws of life. Is it because God sees deeper and "understands," as my lady is so fond of saying? It might well be that He had a different way of judging from ours, seeing well and seeing always what we mean in our hearts.

A Holiday among some Old Friends.

ANYBODY who has watched during a period of some years the diplomatic relations of English municipalities must have been impressed by the vigour and permanence of their corporate patriotism; how greedily the public opinion of a town will cling to any mark of superiority over a rival; with what uneasiness it is brought to recognize such superiority in another; with what perseverance and eagerness the object of desire is sought, and with what satisfaction obtained, whether it be a separate custom-house, or a fresh batch of magistrates, or all exemption from the restrictions on the transport of cattle, or the abolition of a toll which goes to pave and light the streets of a privileged neighbour. No one can form a true conception of old Greek society who for a moment loses sight of the fact that Greece consisted of an assemblage of boroughs with these sentiments of ambition and self-respect intensified twentyfold; sanctified by religious associations; ennobled by the names of heroes and demigods; dignified by the eloquence of orators like Pericles, and the imagination of poets like Sophocles and Pindar; inflamed by the recollection of past insults and injuries; unrestrained by the influence of any central and paramount authority. Amidst materials so inflammable a *causus belli* was never far to seek. Now it was a slight offered by individual members of one community to the patron deity of another; now some time-honoured dispute about boundaries, revived for the occasion beneath the genial influence of local jealousy untempered by the possession of ordnance maps; now a complaint about the harbouring of runaway slaves, or the entertainment of political refugees. A standing bone of contention was the protective tendency of ancient commerce, which may be realized by depicting to oneself all the towns on the Humber actuated in their mutual dealings by the spirit that existed between the Spanish and English traders in the reign of Elizabeth, when a Devonshire skipper detected west of the Azores might make his account never to see Lyme or Dartmouth again unless he could turn the tables upon his captors. With such a tariff it may well be believed that informers drove a bouncing trade.

Then there were the claims of the parent city upon the colony: a fruitful source of discord among an enterprising people, pinched for room at home, who in the space of three centuries covered with thriving settlements the coasts of the Ægean, the Euxine, the Adriatic, and the Ionian Seas. These claims, in theory most extensive and peculiarly binding, in practice were generally allowed to lie dormant until their resuscitation seemed likely to afford a pretext for going to war. The

longest and most determined struggle recorded in Grecian history arose from a dispute between the mother country and the grandmother as to which had the best right to protect their offspring from the incursion of the surrounding aborigines.

There is much truth in the picture drawn by Aristophanes in his play of the *Acharnians*, where the principal actor speaks as follows, in a very free translation :—

" I hope the spectators will not take it amiss if I talk a little about public affairs, though I am playing burlesque—for one has a conscience, even in burlesque. And this time Cleon will hardly be able to charge me with vilifying the State in the presence of foreigners, because it is too early in the year for foreigners, and we have the theatre to ourselves.

" Now, you must know that I perfectly abominate the Lacedæmonians, and cordially hope that the next earthquake will bring all their houses about their ears ; for I, as well as others, have had their foragers in my vineyard. But, come now (for I see none but friends about me), why, after all, are we to lay everything to the door of the Lacedæmonians ? For you will remember that certain of our people—I do not refer to the country in general : don't mistake me for a moment ; I make no allusion to the country in general—certain dirty, counterfeit, contemptible scamps were always giving the police notice about Megarian woollens. And if they caught sight of a cucumber, or a leveret, or a sucking-pig, or a head of garlic, or a lump of salt, as a matter of course it came from Megara, and was declared contraband on the spot. But these doings were a trifle, and too much in the ordinary Athenian style to need remark, until some young sparks thought fit to go on a tipsy frolic to Megara, and carry off a woman ; whereupon the Megarians were cut to the soul by the outrage, and made reprisals by running away with two of Aspasia's girls ; and so the Grecian world broke out into war for the sake of a leash of baggages. And then Olympian Pericles, in all his terrors, fell to thundering and lightning, and shutting our markets against the Megarians, and bringing in a string of prohibitory laws that ran like drinking-catches. And, when the Megarians found themselves dying by slow starvation, they petitioned the Lacedæmonians to get the enactments repealed that had been passed on behalf of those three hussies. But we would not hear of it ; and so shields began banging together from one end of Greece to the other. ' It was all very wrong,' you will say ; but how can you expect other people to be more patient than yourselves ? Why, if a Lacedæmonian had chartered a bumboat, and run a cargo of a single blind puppy into one of your dependencies, would you have sat quiet at home ? Not you. Before the day was out, you would be putting in commission three hundred galleys, and the dockyards would resound with the planing of oar-blades, and the driving in of bolts, and the shifting of rowlocks, and the whistling of boatswains ; and the streets would be alive with paying of bounties, and weighing out of rations, and marines squabbling,

and captains getting elected, and figure-heads getting gilded, and garlic and olives and onions getting stuffed into nets, and tins of preserved anchovies, and garlands, and dancing-girls, and bloody noses, and black eyes."

The historical interest of these incessant wars is out of all proportion to their size. Indeed, military narratives are usually attractive in inverse ratio to the number of combatants engaged ; for, the fewer the actors, the more marked becomes the personal character of the scene. The result of a great modern conflict depends on an immense multitude of incidents, so interwoven that it is all but impossible to disentangle them and to credit each with its due importance. A cursory relation of such a struggle as Magenta or Sadowa is simply unintelligible. We cannot comprehend what caused the failure of the attack on the redoubt, and the partial success of the advance on échelon ; how it was that the right centre found itself compromised about three in the afternoon, and why it should not have experienced that sensation an hour earlier or two hours later. On the other hand, when Mr. Kinglake tells the story so that it can be enjoyed and understood, by recognizing the human element in the affair, there is the drawback that it takes longer to read the battle than to fight it. He must be a very idle fellow who could afford time to get through the Leipsic campaign when detailed at the same length as the fight on the Alma—that is to say, if he could find anybody long-lived enough to write it for him. The Duke of Wellington most happily compared a battle to a London ball. Each person at the breakfast-table next morning can recall certain detached occurrences, and can state generally how the evening went off ; but no one pretends to ascertain the precise sequence and connection of all those individual experiences. A Greek combat may be likened to a Christmas quadrille in the servants' hall, in which everybody knows that the footman wore lavender kid gloves, and that the son of the house flirted with the lady's-maid.

And so it is delightful to turn from the elaborate technicalities of contemporary warfare to the simple manœuvres by which Miltiades and Epaminondas won and lost their battles. Commanding, as he did, a small but high-spirited body of militiamen—who were at home the equals of their leader, and while on active service never forgot that he was their fellow-citizen ; who, when they behaved well, fought for the gratification of an old grudge or for the honour and advancement of their native town ; and, when not in tune, were much more afraid of the enemy than of their own officers—a Greek strategist was forced to adapt his tactics quite as much to the temper of his men as to the nature of the locality. He was not even permitted to take their courage for granted, as is the privilege of generals who have to do with regular soldiers ; but was under the necessity of haranguing his army whenever there was a prospect of coming to blows. Athenian military men, trained in their courts of law and their popular assembly, were for the most part volatile enough ; but it must have been a serious addition to the responsibilities of an honest Boeotian veteran to

spend the eve of an action in stringing together platitudes about patriotism, and tutelary gods, and ancestral ashes, when he ought to have been eating his supper and visiting his outposts.

A good illustration, both of the minute scale on which a Greek commander conducted his operations, and of the weight which he attached to catching his adversaries when they were not in a fighting humour, is afforded by Cleon's expedition to Amphipolis, against which he marched at the head of 1,500 foot and 300 cavalry. Brasidas, the best partisan leader of the day, and perhaps of all time, hesitated to attack so powerful a force in the open field, and made arrangements for sallying forth upon the invaders at an unexpected moment, just as they should imagine that they were going to occupy the place without opposition. But it so happened that some Athenian scouts espied symptoms of an ambuscade within the city, and took the information to Cleon, who, having reconnoitred the Spartan position by the very primitive method of looking underneath the gate, ordered his column to draw off towards higher ground. Upon which Brasidas said to those about him, "I can see by the movement of their heads and their pikes that the enemy will not stand. People who march in that style never await the onset. Throw open the gates, and let us charge them like men who are sure to win!" And with 150 picked soldiers at his heels he ran out to his last victory.

The multifarious talents and accomplishments that were indispensable to a Greek general made a heavy demand even upon the many-sided Athenian character. It was of primary necessity that he should be a skilful diplomatist, in order to keep his network of intrigues under his own hand, and not leave them to the criticism and manipulation of his political rivals at home. He had one agent at the Macedonian court, urging Perdiccas to attack the hostile colonies from the land-side, and promising, in return, to get the heir-apparent naturalised as an Attic freeman; another among the Thracian mountains, levying a corps of archers and slingers, and doing his best to prejudice the barbarian intellect against the Lacedæmonian recruiting-officers; while his most confidential emissary was at Sardis, watching the carefully balanced policy of the Satrap, or even posting up-country on a six months' journey to the neighbourhood of the Caspian sea, with a remote hope of inducing the Great King to forget Marathon. He must know the rudiments of divination, so as to keep a sharp eye on his prophets, and insist with authority, when he had once made up his mind to engage the enemy, on the priest sacrificing sheep after sheep until the omens chose to be favourable. He must be well acquainted with naval matters, in a country where nine-tenths of the fighting took place among the islands or along the sea-board. And, besides being something of a soothsayer, and something more of a sailor, it was, above all, essential that he should be very much of a politician; for the success or failure of a military enterprise was inextricably bound up in the changes and chances of internal politics. Throughout the towns of Greece the oligarchy held staunchly by conservative Sparta; while the democracy

looked to Athens as their natural patron and protector—regarded her triumphs and humiliations as their own—summoned her without scruple to the rescue, if their political adversaries proved too strong for them to manage single-handed—and, when their own ascendancy had been secured, freely sent their ships and squadrons to back her quarrel for the time being. A member of the popular party at Corinth virtually reckoned an Athenian as his countryman, and a Corinthian aristocrat as an alien; whereas a Megarian tory would far rather see a Lacedæmonian garrison in the citadel than a liberal majority in the senate. If her friends gained the upper hand, a city which had been a thorn in the side of Athens might in a day become an outpost for her protection; while a lucky *coup d'état*, or a few judicious assassinations, might place thousands of shields and scores of galleys at the disposal of Sparta. So that a wise commander paid quite as much attention to the opinions of the enemy as to his own tactics; and a prudent engineer trusted less to his scaling-ladders and his mines than to the chance of finding a gate left on the jar, or a rope hanging over the parapet. A general unskilled in statecraft was about as useful as an electioneering agent who ignores Church matters.

In this respect the historians of Greece, from Xenophon downwards, have imitated the people of whom they write, and make a point of ranging themselves under the banners of one or the other of the two leading cities. This spirit of uncompromising partisanship, excusable, and even graceful in a contemporary, writing of the scenes in which he had acted and the men whom he had loved and hated, becomes somewhat absurd when transferred to pages printed in Paternoster Row. For some time previous to the French Revolution Athens had the best of it. Freedom and equality were the order of the day. Liberals of a milder type talked with admiration of Pericles and Aristides; while sterner spirits were all for Harmodius and Aristogiton, and for carrying their daggers in boughs of myrtle, and for irrigating trees of liberty with the blood of tyrants. Then came the great flood of conservative reaction, which penetrated into this singular side-channel, and produced a crop of authors who discovered that the Attic democracy was a fickle and ferocious mob: so godless that it burned the temples of a conquered city, and so superstitious that it flew into a frenzy of rage and terror when an idol was mutilated by a party of midnight roysterers; so inconstant that it deserted Alcibiades, and so fond and besotted that it always stuck to Cleon. This school could see nothing in the Athenian constitution except ballot, universal suffrage, and graduated taxation, bearing lightly on the poor and heavily on the rich and powerful; struck at Charles Fox in the person of Demosthenes, and bespattered Orator Hunt under the guise of Hyperbolus; and loathed the wreath on the brows of an Hellenic demagogue as if it were the white hat of a British radical. For a generation the serried ranks of Mitford and his disciples carried all before them; but a far keener intellect, and an abler though not an impartial pen, has at length turned the balance of war; and it is probable that Englishmen will henceforward in the main take their

opinions on Grecian international history from Mr. Grote's exhaustive yet most attractive work.

When we consider that all Hellenic communities sprang from a common stock, worshipped common gods, and spoke a common tongue, it is not surprising that men of the same political faction should have made common cause throughout the Grecian world. Even among the heterogeneous races included within the circle of modern civilization, there are symptoms that an age is approaching when the patriotism of party will displace the patriotism of locality. Increased facility of locomotion and communication is beginning to do the work of a universal language. There is everywhere a great and growing fellow-feeling between those who worship reason and progress, as opposed to the votaries of force and prescription. And it is by the direction which his sympathy takes with reference to affairs abroad that we can test the real instinct of a man more surely than by his professed opinions on matters nearer home. Towards the close of 1865, on the eve of the political *mélée*, by observing the tone which a member of Parliament adopted with regard to the Jamaica troubles, a shrewd guess might be made at the lobby in which he would be most often found in the course of the coming session. On the other hand, the tirades of the intellectual French press against English reform have opened our eyes as to the liberalism of certain Paris liberals. The Special Correspondent of *The Times* is great on General Butler's proclamation, Fort Lafayette, and the rising inundation of greenbacks. The radical pamphleteer can see nothing but the barbarity of the Confederate guerillas, and the horrors of a Southern prison. The conservative, ready charged with pity and indignation, waits for the news that Maximilian has been shot; while the liberal is prepared to be unable to forget who it was that murdered Ortega and his comrades in vindication of the principle of hereditary right divine, imported to a hemisphere where it never existed from a continent where it is no longer wanted. We condemn the tyranny or violence committed in distant countries on behalf of the cause which we have at heart with a show of displeasure not more genuine than that which we exhibit when our leading supporter canvasses a tenant in a manner too pressing and with too loud a voice, or when humbler allies evince their attachment by mobbing a hostile freeholder. And when the cause wins a signal victory, on however remote a field, we exult as if at the critical hour of noon there had occurred a favourable turn in the tide of a hard-fought contest; as if, to the sound of the workmen's dinner-bell, yards and factories were pouring forth their streams of friendly voters; while already our own statement of the poll places us five hundred to the fore, and our opponent contents himself with a majority of eleven. To the true soldier, as long as the day goes well, it matters not whether the enemy are giving ground on the extreme of the farthest wing, or in his own immediate front. Success is the same, whether gained among the pine-forests of Virginia, or the vineyards of Lombardy, or on the Bohemian slopes, or around the Westminster hustings.

The security of these little Greek boroughs, hating each other more bitterly than Vienna and Turin, and situated in closer proximity than Putney and Islington, depended absolutely on the natural or artificial strength of their defences. In most cases the citadel, in some the entire town, was planted on the summit of a precipitous rock. Where the site was less advantageous the place was surrounded by battlements of immense height and solidity. If the territory comprised a port anywhere within six or seven miles of the capital, the city was connected with the harbour and the dock by works known technically as "long walls." In time of war a sufficient number of the burghers were told off to man the line of circumvallation. A bell was passed from hand to hand, whose continuous ringing announced that the cordon of sentries was on the alert. Sparta, alone of Hellenic communities, scorned to surround herself with material bulwarks other than the corslets of her soldiers; but like Paris in 1814, she found reason to repent of this over-confidence when her power had been shaken, and her ascendancy called in question, by the vital defeat of Leuctra.

In the eyes of a Greek the town-wall was the symbol of distinct national existence. The first act of a conqueror who desired to have his prostrate enemies permanently at his mercy, was to level the fortifications, and split up the municipality into separate villages. In the case where a modern victor would prohibit a dependent sovereign from increasing his standing army beyond police requirements, Lysander or Agesilaus would have thought it enough to forbid the rebuilding of the ramparts. There is little in ancient narrative more curious than the mixture, so intensely Greek, of heroism with mendacity, whereby Themistocles gained time to fortify Athens in the teeth of Spartan jealousy and selfishness. And there is nothing more touching than the passage in which Xenophon relates how Conon sailed straight from his victory off Cnidus to restore the walls that had lain in ruins since the sad day when, undone by her own ambition rather than by the prowess of the foe, after facing Greece in arms for a generation, the imperial city fell. To the completion of that design the townsmen fondly looked for the return of her old supremacy and ancestral renown by land and sea. They believed that they should once more see their home such as they loved to describe her in conventional, but not unmerited, epithets,—"the bright, the violet-crowned, the enviable, the famed in song." And no wonder; for he who to-day peruses that story,—though his patriotism is due elsewhere, and his more enlightened ideas of right and wrong are shocked at every turn with the iniquity and cruelty displayed by Athens during the period of her domination,—can hardly repress a transient hope, in defiance of his acquaintance with what is now history, that he is again to read of her as she was under the rule of Pericles; willing for the moment to forget that, however dexterously the architect might piece together the scattered stones, no skill or industry could recall the valour, the energy, the simple hardihood which urged on the galleys at Salamis, and cut its way through the stockade at Mycale.

The loftiness of the walls, and the multitude of the garrison, consisting, as it did, of every able-bodied male in the population, effectually ensured a Greek city from capture by escalade. Besides, it was abundantly proved, by the experience of the Civil War in America, to what an extent militia inside a work fight better than militia in the field. Nor was it easy for the assailants to proceed by the more tardy method of blockade, which would have necessitated the retention under arms for months together of men who, after the first few days of soldiering, began to fret at being kept from their barns and workshops. In the case of a small town that had made itself exceptionally obnoxious, the besiegers sometimes had resort to the plan of running a counter-wall round the entire circuit of the fortifications, which could be readily guarded by successive detachments of themselves and their allies until the place was reduced by famine. Athens, indeed, was enabled by her opulence to keep on foot considerable bodies of troops during protracted and distant campaigns. Throughout the siege of Potidea her heavy-armed infantry at no time fell below a force of three thousand shields, every man receiving pay at the rate of twenty pence a day. She spent in all half a million of money upon this operation, which closely resembled the siege of Sebastopol in duration, locality, and climate; and surpassed it in the misery undergone by the invading army.

In the ranks of that army marched a pikeman conspicuous for courage and eccentricity, with whose description Alcibiades amused a circle of guests over the wine of Agathon the tragic poet,—having already taken a good deal too much of somebody else's. "You must know," said he, "that Socrates and I served together at Potidea, and belonged to the same mess. And there, whenever, as is so often the case on active service, we ran short of provisions, no one came near him in the power of enduring privation. On the other hand, when we had plenty to eat and drink, he showed a rare capacity for enjoyment; and, though he did not care for wine, if put to it he could sit out the whole table; and yet no living man ever saw Socrates the worse for liquor: both of which facts the present company are likely to find out in the course of the evening. And during the depth of the winter, (and a winter in those parts is no trifle,) when all who were off duty kept close at home, and the men on guard turned out in the most extraordinary panoply of wrappers, with their feet stuffed into sheepskins and rolls of felt, this wonderful person went abroad in that old cloak we all know by heart, and trudged barefoot through the ice and snow more freely than his comrades who had taken such precautions against the cold.

"And I remember well that one morning early, as he was going about his business, an idea struck him, and he stood still to examine it. And, when it did not resolve itself, to his satisfaction, he would not give it up, but remained standing until noon came, and people began to notice him, and to say among themselves, 'Socrates has been standing there since morning, thinking something out.' Eventually a party of Ionians, after their dinner, finding the weather sultry, brought out some bedding, and

lay down in the open air ; keeping an eye on him meanwhile, to see whether he would stand there all night. And they were not disappointed, for he never stirred till daylight, when he saluted the rising sun, and went his way.

“ Then, too, you ought to have witnessed his behaviour on the occasion when the army was escaping from the rout of Delium ; where I was present in the cavalry, and he in the line of spears. When our people broke and ran he walked away with Laches. And I fell in with them, and bade him keep his heart up, as I would not desert him. Now, as I was in comparative safety on the back of my horse, I could watch the pair at my leisure : and there could be no doubt which was the more cool and collected. For Socrates marched along, as if he were crossing the market-place at home, with his nose cocked up and his eyes busy to the right and left, just as you, Aristophanes, described him in your burlesque, quietly scanning the stream of friends and enemies as it poured by with an air which most unmistakeably proclaimed to all in the neighbourhood that whoever meddled with him would have cause to regret it. And so he brought himself and his companion safe off the field ; for, when a man carries himself in that fashion, the pursuers generally keep their distance, and prefer to go after those who are flying helter-skelter.”

As a Greek general had seldom the force to storm a city, or the time to starve it out, he for the most part confined himself to two modes of warfare. He would enter the hostile borders, and select some mountain village planted amidst a network of gorges and torrents, or some sheer rock standing out like an island from the surrounding plain, and occupy it with a party of light troops, horse and foot, under the orders of an active and adroit leader. Or perhaps he would hunt up the evicted inhabitants of some town which had perished by the act of the people whom he was engaged in annoying, and plant them down bodily in the territory of their former persecutors. Among all the calamities of war none came so vividly home to a Greek as the presence of a marauding garrison within his own confines. In national pride he equalled the Spaniard, whose first waking thought is said to be that the Englishman is in Gibraltar. And apart from the disgrace,—apart from the bitter consciousness that tributary populations would not long submit to the ascendancy of a state which could not keep the enemy off its own soil,—there were the daily losses by excursions of the foragers into the adjacent country ; the expense and trouble of feeding the army of observation which watched the approaches, and maintaining doubled and trebled guards along the city-walls ; the sleeplessness ; the worry ; the bad food ; the bivouacs in the snow ; the wear and tear of horsehoofs amidst the ravines where the fighting lay ; the nightly disappearance of slaves, the smartest and most valuable of whom were always the first to be aware that they had an asylum close at hand. During the Peloponnesian War upwards of twenty thousand runaways emancipated themselves by taking refuge in the Spartan outpost of Decelea ; and, owing to the increased

exigencies of the war both in town and country, Athens, to quote the words of Thucydides, was brought from the condition of a city to that of a military station.

Or in the late spring, when the crops were still in the ground, the belligerent who was the stronger or the more enterprising would summon all his allies to some convenient rendezvous, and repair thither himself with every available man equipped and provisioned for a campaign of from ten to thirty days. And then he would cross the frontier, and pour forth a deluge of spoilers over the domain of his unfortunate rival. Meanwhile, in expectation of the coming storm, the entire rural population of the invaded country would have betaken itself to its strongholds. If the combatant who was inferior on land had command of the sea, the cattle would have been ferried across to the nearest friendly islands ; while the agricultural implements, the jars of wine, the family gods, the furniture, and even the fixtures of the homesteads, would have been packed into carts and transported within the walls of the capital. Unless the farmer was lucky enough to possess a town residence he made shift to live in a temple or an outhouse, or even to encamp gipsy-fashion along the inside of the rampart. It must have been sad news for a rural proprietor, just as the corn was ripening to his mind, and his lambs had got well through the perils of the cold weather, and the fruit was sufficiently forward to allow of a fair guess at the yield of figs and pomegranates, to hear that, Spartan cavalry had been cutting grass within a league of the frontier. It must have cost him a pang to abandon his cheerful and wholesome programme of country pursuits ; the morning inspection of the blood-colt which was to do something at the next Isthmian but one ; the evening gossip over negus and chestnuts about the latest news from Sicily, and the best receipt for pickling olives ; the fresh air ; the early nights ; the presidency of the local games ; the observance and affection of his neighbours ; the presence and favour of the paternal deities whom he had but last year propitiated with a new bronze hearth, and a pair of statuettes from the hand of Phidias's foreman. To exchange all this for a sojourn in the hot and dreary city, where bread, and vinegar, and charcoal, and all that his farm gave him for the taking, had to be bought at war prices ; where the first year he lodged about among his old school-fellows, and the second boarded with the agent who in more prosperous times disposed of his wine and oil, until, as time went on, and peace seemed more remote than ever, he had outstayed his welcome in every quarter, and was fain to squat beneath a turret on the battlement, beguiling his involuntary idleness by speculating whether the pillagers would think it worth their while to cut down the rest of his orchard, and whether the slave whom he had left in charge was likely to keep dark about the pear-tree under which his plate was buried.

It is easy to conceive the distress of the half-fed and badly sheltered multitude during these most unwelcome annual gatherings. May and June in the Levant are at best trying months, and must indeed have been

intolerable in the over-crowded bylanes of a beleaguered town ; especially if the engineers of the aggressor succeeded in diverting the supply of water. Grecian cities, never very rich in sanitary appliances, were under these circumstances peculiarly susceptible to the inroads of disease : and it was in such a plight that Athens first harboured the fearful epidemic immortalized by Thucydides in the simple and striking narrative of an eyewitness and a sufferer, which has afforded matter for imitation in many languages and metres. The impatience of the people inside, tormented by drought and discomfort, and goaded to desperation by the scenes of rapine and wanton destruction which were enacting beneath their very eyes, would inevitably break forth in a cry for instant combat. Forgetting that they had surrendered their land to depredation because, at a time when their judgment could be better trusted, they had deliberately come to the conclusion that the enemy were too much for them in the field, they would assail the authorities with passionate demands for permission to strike a blow in defence of their hearths and holdings. At such a crisis a conscientious prime minister or commander-in-chief had indeed a thankless office : and the more so, should the invaders have been careful to aggravate his difficulties by ostentatiously excepting his property from the general spoliation, and thereby attaching to him a suspicion of treachery and collusion. If the leading man had the character required to withstand, and the influence to restrain, his more impulsive countrymen, (a service which they whom he benefited seldom forgave or forgot,) the enemy after a time would grow tired of plundering other people's crops, and, gorged with booty, would march home to gather in their own.

But things did not always end so peaceably. Unless a recent defeat had cooled the temper of the weaker party the third or fourth day of a foray often witnessed the forces of the two cities drawn out face to face. Free from the smoke of a modern engagement, and the fog and drizzle of a suburban British review, an Hellenic battle must have been a gallant sight. In purple tunics and burnished armour the men stood ten, fifteen, and twenty deep beneath a glittering forest of spear-heads. Those who were well-to-do had no lack of gold about their greaves and breastplates, and were dandified in plumes and sword-belts ; while even the poorest citizen wore a helmet fashioned by the exquisite taste of a Greek artificer. It must have been a trial for the nerves of the bravest to stand biting his moustache ; humming a bar of the *Psean* which he was to sing within the next quarter of an hour ; wondering whether his widow would marry again ; hoping that the cobbler on his right might not turn tail, or the teacher of gymnastics on his left shove him out of the line ; dimly conscious meanwhile that his colonel was exhorting him in a series of well-turned periods to bethink himself of the tomb which covered those who died in Thermopylae, and the trophy which stood on the beach at Artemisium. And then the signal-trumpet sounded ; and the music struck up ; and the whole array moved forward, steadily at first, but breaking into a run when only a few hundred yards separated the

approaching lines. And, as the distance between grew shorter, and the tramp of the enemy mingled with their own, the front-rank men had just time to try and imagine that the countenances of the people opposite looked like flinching, and that the notes of their war-chant had begun to falter, and the next second there would be a crash of pikes, and a grating of bucklers, and a clutching of beards ; and those who would fain be home again were pushed on by the mass behind, excited at hearing others fighting, and with no steel at its own throat ; and, after five minutes of thrusting, and shouting, and fierce straining of foot, and knee, and shoulder, the less determined or the worse disciplined of the two hosts would learn, by one more cruel experience, the old lesson that life as well as honour is for those who retain their self-respect and their shields.

Romantic as were the incidents of a pitched battle on land, the accompaniments of an ancient sea-fight appear still more diverting to an English reader : for a naval action consisted in driving one against another ships almost as slender in proportion to the number of people whom they carried as the racing-boats built by Messrs. Searle, of Oxford. Athens, in her day of greatness, far surpassed all other powers in this branch of warfare. Her valiant and noble bearing during the Persian affairs in the first quarter of the fifth century before Christ, as contrasted with the underhand self-seeking policy of Sparta, gained her the general confidence and esteem, and laid the foundations of her empire, which ere long comprehended most of the islands and maritime cities of the Grecian world. Honourably won, her supremacy was upheld and extended by far more questionable procedures, and soon degenerated into an execrable tyranny. She converted the contingent of galleys due to the national fleet from each of those whom she was still pleased to call her allies into a contribution of money, and in so far contrived to lessen the number of states which kept on foot a war-navy ; while with the funds thus obtained she put on the stocks annually from twenty to thirty keels — a supply which enabled her to maintain an average of three hundred ships laid up in ordinary. This department was managed with true republican economy. Mr. Seely's mouth may well water when he reads that the cash balance in the hands of the chief constructor of the Athenian Admiralty fell short of seven hundred pounds. The galleys were called by every pretty female name whose etymology contained an allusion to the sea ; and, when the list of Nausicaas and Nauphantes had been exhausted, recourse was had to the abstract qualities, " Health," " Foresight," and the like ; or to words of happy omen, such as " The Fair Voyage," " The Sovereign," and " The Saviour of the State." The Romans, who took to the water on compulsion, and never could be brought to understand how anybody should prefer to fight on a deck who could get a bit of firm and dry turf, thought masculine appellations quite good enough for vessels which they loved one less than another.

The imperial city prudently monopolized nautical skill by taking care

that her petty officers, whose excellence was acknowledged by her rivals with despair and envy, should be one and all of pure Attic blood. There was the master, who superintended the sailing of the vessel when the wind allowed the canvas to be spread ; the boatswain, who instructed the rowers, gave them the time with his flute, and picked out men with straight backs and strong loins to handle the heavy sweeps of the upper tier ; and the steersman, whose aim it was to avoid the direct shock of the enemy's beak, and by a dexterous manœuvre to strike her amidships or astern, sweep away a bank of oars, break her rudder, or perhaps sink her outright with all hands on board. Her vast resources gave Athens the command of the labour-market, and permitted her to take into pay from every port in Greece crowds of seamen to perform the subordinate duties of the ship. But, though at ordinary times the bulk of the rowers were foreign mercenaries, on occasions of urgent public danger the state summoned all her citizens who were not touched in the wind to help in pulling along her galleys. There is something quaint in the notion that Æschylus and Lysias must have been familiar with those miseries which a college crew know so well, and in all probability prided themselves on a pet salve for raw fingers, or a knowing receipt for training. Aristophanes writes with contempt of sluggards who could not show an honourable blister earned in their country's cause, and commends one of his characters for placing a soft cushion beneath an old hero who had fought at Salamis.

From the causes enumerated in the preceding paragraphs Athens was always beforehand with her adversaries, and established a vast naval superiority at the commencement of hostilities. At an early period of the Peloponnesian War, Phormio, an old salt of the best Attic school, with a score of ships, went straight into the midst of a fleet of forty-seven triremes, and captured twelve of them after a fight which apparently did not last as many minutes. The result is less marvellous when we learn that the allies arranged their galleys in a circle with prows outwards, like the spokes of a wheel : a formation which the land-breeze blowing down the Corinthian Gulf soon converted into a hopeless medley. While the men were swearing at their neighbours and shoving each other apart with poles, the Athenian admiral bore down on them with his squadron of crack sailors following him in single file. The Peloponnesians soon appeared again, reinforced to a sum total of seventy-seven vessels, and this time much better commanded. Phormio, by an act of carelessness, was forced to fight at a disadvantage, lost nine of his ships, and had to run for it. But, when the action seemed to have been already decided against him, the hindmost of the fugitives, noticing one of the hostile galleys considerably ahead of the main body, dodged round a merchantman which happened to be lying at anchor, and sent the presumptuous foe to the bottom ; but not before the Lacedæmonian admiral, who was on board the ill-fated craft, had found time to stab himself with his sword. Upon this the eleven Athenians recovered their courage, turned on their pursuers, drove before

them exactly seven times their own number in ignominious rout, and recaptured all that they had lost, besides taking six of the enemy.

Accommodating themselves as best they might to the overwhelming disparity in fighting power, the Spartans adopted the usual course of a belligerent who cannot keep the sea, and freely granted letters of marque among their naval allies. Elastic Greek consciences soon began to ignore the faint line which separates privateering from piracy; and a Megarian corsair was very indifferent as to whether the fishermen and traders with whom she fell in did or did not own allegiance to Attic rule. All prisoners, especially those whose dialect and credentials ought to have exempted them from capture, were killed as soon as caught, and hidden away by night among the ravines which ran down to the coast. The public mind, in a general way not over particular with regard to human life, appears to have considered that this proceeding carried somewhat to excess the principle of dead men telling no tales. Accordingly, when shortly afterwards the Athenians found means to seize some Spartan Commissioners who were passing through a neutral country on their way to the Persian Court, the whole party were conducted to Athens, put to death without trial or inquiry, and thrown down a chasm among some rocks, as a solemn reprisal for the outrages committed by the Peloponnesian free-booters: a sure method of anticipating summarily the objections of the international jurists on the other side, who indeed had against them an awkward precedent in the case of the heralds of Darius, whom sixty years back the Lacedamonian authorities had disposed of in a manner precisely similar, even to the smallest details.

'Don Ricardo.'

I MET him first at the Hôtel Peninsulaire, Puerta del Sol, Madrid. He was then about forty years old, five feet eleven inches in height, and powerfully put together. To some who read this he is very likely known; if so, they will endorse my opinion, I am sure, that a more charming companion in every way it is impossible to have. How full of information he was! How thoroughly he knew Spain! He had carried a pantaloons?—no it couldn't have been a pantaloons—I must mean a mandoline! I don't think that was quite it. Bandaloon? Yes, it must have been a bandaloon—in the Carlist War. He could point out to you the spot where such and such a friend had fallen in the revolutions. What stories he had of brigands, duels, camps and courts! What countryman was he? Well, I should think originally he was Irish, but for the latter twenty years of his life he had lived in Spain. He it was who took me to my first bull-fight—not that I am going to give you an account of one now; it has been done often, and badly enough by moralists and members of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals—I will merely say (I know one or two gentlemen in England who will agree with me) that I would go, as I have done, from one end of Spain to another to see a good bull-fight. I consider it the most exciting and beautiful spectacle to be seen in the present day. Yes! it was with Don Ricardo that I went to my first bull-fight: he an old connoisseur sitting close to me, pointing out the various points, &c. &c. How I enjoyed it! And between the intervals he told me of the scene of bloodshed he had once seen in that Plaza de Toros.

"The season," said Don Ricardo, "had been remarkably dull: either the people were poorer than usual, or the bulls were of an inferior breed: one thing was very certain, that fight after fight took place, and the Plaza, instead of being crowded, as it is to-day, with ten thousand people, had a beggarly two or three hundred scattered about. It became evident that the contractor, unless he could fill the ring again, would shortly be a ruined man. It chanced that about this time there arrived in Madrid a travelling menagerie; amongst other animals it contained a very fine tiger. An idea entered into the head of the contractor that he would entertain the gay world of Madrid with a spectacle such as had not been seen since the days of the Romans. He accordingly, after a good deal of bargaining, succeeded in purchasing from the showman his large tiger, and a day or two afterwards the walls of Madrid were placarded with announcements of a fight that would take place on a certain day between 'a tiger of enormous

size and ferocity,' and a bull of the celebrated breed of Don Fulano. The day arrived, and the Plaza was crowded. Now a bull-fight generally averages about two-and-a-half hours, and the contractor had bothered his brain how he should spin the time out. He began accordingly with a fight between a bulldog and a donkey."

"Good gracious," I could not help exclaiming, "you don't mean to say that was worth seeing."

"Indeed," continued Don Ricardo, "it proved a most excellent fight, and lasted about twenty minutes, before the bulldog was killed: most of us thought the bulldog would be the conqueror, till we saw how cleverly the donkey struck him with his fore-feet, and fell upon him with his knees, when the dog seized him by the throat. This being ended, the sand raked over, the band finished their tune, and the multitude hanging over the sides of the arena in that breathless silence which always precedes the letting out of the bull—the door was flung back, and a noble bull dashed into the ring with that impetuous rush which is so fine. He galloped wildly round the ring once or twice, apparently astonished at finding nothing to encounter, and then took up his position in the centre of the arena, pawing, and shaking his curly black locks over his small stag-like muzzle. A door facing him was then opened and the tiger was let out. It was very singular to remark the different way that the tiger came out of his den; no wild rush or roar, but sneaking out of his cell he crept close to the barrier, and crouching against it, looked with half-closed eyes at his enemy. The bull directly he saw him gave one or two wild snorts, full of vigour and passion, and backed a few paces. He did not seem afraid, but conscious he was in the presence of a dangerous enemy, not to be trifled with; so they continued gazing at each other for some seconds. Presently the tiger seemed to crouch gradually lower and lower till he lay literally *ventre à terre*, and commenced dragging himself paw by paw nearer to the bull. He in his turn retreated two or three steps, and then stood still awaiting the event—no movement but an occasional petulant shake of his head, and a slight noise like a deep sigh. You might have heard a pin drop in the Plaza, so intense was the excitement as inch by inch the tiger drew near. Suddenly! in a moment! he seemed to double himself into a ball, and then fly out like a piece of watch-spring, but with no roar, in perfect silence he sprang! A wild furious snort on the bull's part as he met him, and we saw him receive the tiger full on his horns; for an instant one claw hung on the bull's glossy shoulder, and then he fell a corpse on the sand, for the bull's horn penetrated the chest and heart. The conqueror sniffed once or twice at the body, made a plunge at it, and then cantered round the ring as if aware of the gallant feat he had accomplished. The band struck up a lively air, in cantered the mules, the dead tiger was dragged out, the bull shut up, and the spectators sat still. (About three-quarters of an hour had elapsed, and the unlucky contractor had nothing more provided for his patrons.) After waiting a little while, the shout, uttered in that peculiar sing-song

always used in the bull-ring, began of 'Otra tigrá! Otra tigrá!' It was taken up by voice after voice, till the whole circo rang with this chant, 'Otra tigrá.' (Any one who has been to a bull-fight will most likely have heard the cry of either 'Otro toró,' or 'fuego,' and will be able to put the proper tune to it, for it is impossible to describe it.) The contractor was furious, mad—he knew not what to do ; he rushed into the ring, begged for mercy, assured his friends it was utterly impossible to procure 'another tiger.' Still the cry went steadily on 'Otra tigrá.' Then the contractor became nervous, then frightened, and finally fled. Then the capitán-general announced from the queen's box that the fight was over, and requested the populace to withdraw. No notice ; nothing but the cry 'Otra tigrá.' Then the military were called in and ordered to clear the ring (a regiment is always on guard outside during a bull-fight) ; then the manolas began to strike the little wax matches they carry—then some one set light to a paper fan, and in another minute all the manolas were lighting the hangings and the benches. Then, alas ! some one gave the order to fire, and the troops fired ! Some twenty were killed and wounded, the remainder of us fled, as hard as we could. So ended this fight between a tiger and bull," said Don Ricardo. "I remained till the firing began, when I bolted as hard as I could go, for one never knows in this country when a revolution may break out, or on what pretence ; I have myself seen serious outbreaks for less reason. The military were blamed by some, but defended by many on the score that if they had not fired, Madrid might in a few hours have been in flames, as indeed was very likely with such an excitable people as the Spaniards."

The bull who had fought so well, I believe, was spared and sent to the stud. I have only heard of one other instance of a bull's life being granted him, and a lawsuit was going on about him, when I was in Madrid (1861). He was a one-horned bull, and had performed prodiges of valour. Horse after horse went down before him ; at last the supply of horses ran short, the bull having killed some twenty-five. This was announced, and the people demanded the bull's life, which was granted : a wonderful instance of mercy, and proving what uncommonly good sport he must have showed for a Spaniard to cry, "Hold, enough." The contractor sent him up to his farm ; the *breeder* of the bull, however, sued the contractor, stating that he sold the bull to be killed, not to propagate his valuable breed, the contractor stating he bought him to do what he liked with him. This case, as I said before, was going on whilst I was in Madrid, but how it ended I know not,—I should fear the poor brute was condemned. I have always experienced at bull-fights the greatest courtesy ; sometimes, however, Spaniards will remark upon a stranger if he happens to have anything very peculiar on, as in the case of an Englishman, a friend of Don Ricardo, whom he chaperoned to the bull-ring at Madrid. The morning had been showery, and Mr. A—— had put on a light mackintosh. During the time the public were waiting for the entrance of the first bull,

this coat attracted the attention of No. 6. (I need not explain at length what No. 6 is—better known as Numero Seis—as those who know the Plaza de Toros at Madrid will doubtless remember it. Suffice it to say, that it is a large box on the ground floor, capable of containing some 800 or 400 persons, and in which the connoisseurs in bull-fighting always take up their position. No. 6 is more dreaded than the press, and I do not think I exaggerate when I say that the torreadors fight entirely at No. 6, and watch its occupants as eagerly as an author might glance nervously at the face of some well-known critic, on the appearance for the first night of a new play.) The coat, then, of Mr. A—— having attracted No. 6, they considered it necessary to make some remark upon it, and a sing-song was begun of (translated), "That he take off his mack-in-tösh. That he take off his mack-in-tösh." This repeated by four or five hundred voices, whilst every eye was fixed upon him, made Mr. A—— feel very uncomfortable, and turning to Don Ricardo: "What on earth are they saying? and why are they all looking this way?" Don Ricardo had to explain that they wished him to take his coat off. "Oh, certainly," replied Mr. A——, and immediately pulled it off—when the chorus directly changed into "Gratias, Caballerö! Gratias, Caballerö!" The bull, however, was a long time making his appearance, and No. 6 found the time heavy on their hands, so the chorus began again, "That he put *on* his mack-in-tösh. That he put *on* his mack-in-tösh." "What on earth is it now?" inquired poor Mr. A——, and Don Ricardo had again to explain that No. 6 thought that after all Mr. A—— looked better *in* his mackintosh. Very good-naturedly he again complied. The attention of nearly the whole Plaza had by this time been directed to the unlucky owner of the mackintosh, and no sooner had he struggled into it, than an enormous chorus, from all sides, burst out of "Gratias, Caballerö! Gratias, Caballerö!" accompanied with bows and smiles from all directions. Luckily for Mr. A——, at this minute the bull dashed into the ring and he was left in peace.

One day, I remember walking past a certain banking-house in Madrid, when Don Ricardo stopped me, and pointing to the house said, "Ah! in that house I met that wonderful fellow who called himself 'General Plantagenet Harrison.' Did you ever meet him?" I had to own my ignorance, though I daresay many who read this will remember his name—some perhaps with sorrow. "Well," continued Don Ricardo, "I will tell you my experience with him, and his doings in this country, as I was behind the scenes and know the circumstances intimately.

"I was sitting with Señor Tal, the banker, one day, chatting and smoking, when a clerk came into the room and said, 'A gentleman, Señor Tal, who wishes to see you.' 'What about?' 'I know not!' 'Tell him I'm busy.' The clerk went off, but came back in a minute, saying the gentleman said his business was urgent, and that he must see the Señor. 'Well, well, show him in. Don't go, Don Ricardo,' as I was preparing to rise. I accordingly sat down again, and in a second or two

the clerk opened one of the large folding doors which are so common in Spain. We could see no one, but an authoritative voice said in excellent Spanish, 'Open the other door.' The astonished clerk flung open the other door, and admitted a remarkably handsome, I might almost say, noble-looking man. Both of us rose almost involuntarily and bowed, he acknowledged our courtesy very slightly, and looking at us—'Which of you gentlemen is the Señor Tal?' Tal replied by a low bow. The unknown then advanced and taking out a pocket-book presented a card with 'General Plantagenet Harrison' engraved on it. More bowing, and then the general took out some papers from his book, saying, 'I have some circular notes of Messrs. Ferris and Barker, whose correspondent you are, I believe, and as I require a largish sum, I preferred seeing you, so that there might be no delay.' Señor Tal took the notes and letter of introduction. Everything was in due form. 'Will you kindly sign your name, General Harrison, on the back of the notes.' This was soon done, and the signatures compared. 'Do you wish for the whole sum?' (It was 1,500*l.*) 'No; 1,000*l.* will be sufficient for me to-night, I hope—perhaps if I take more it may tempt me to play higher than I care for—as I see you have a very nice cercle here.' The clerk in the meantime had been despatched to the bank to get the money, and the General continued talking to us till his return, when he took his thousand in notes, and stuffing them carelessly into his coat-pocket, bowed and withdrew. Señor Tal was, I found, as much charmed with our visitor as myself. Though an Englishman he spoke Spanish, literally like a native, that is to say, an educated one; his evident acquaintance with all that was going on in the world perfectly astonished us. Kings and queens—emperors and princes—all seemed to be his intimate friends, yet at the same time there was no brag, but their names seemed to come accidentally and easily from his mouth. Before we parted we agreed that we would meet at the club in the evening, so that we might have an opportunity of bettering our acquaintance with the General. Punctually at ten o'clock, therefore, I entered the club, and found Señor Tal awaiting me in the courtyard. He told me the General had not yet arrived, so we sat down, lighted our cigarettes and waited. Eleven, and at length twelve o'clock struck, and no General appeared. So, tired of waiting, we agreed that he must be tired with his journey and had gone to bed, to which place we also went off.

"Next morning, whilst I was reading the *Diario* after breakfast, I heard a hurried step on the stairs, and in another second Señor Tal rushed into the room and flung himself down in a chair, with a gesture of perfect despair. 'What is it, my dear Tal? Bank broke?' 'Read this,' he replied, handing me a slip of paper from the telegraph-office. I took it and found the following words as near as I can remember. 'A notorious English swindler, calling himself General Plantagenet Harrison, and travelling with forged circular notes on Messrs. Ferris and Barker, has just left Bayonne, where he succeeded in obtaining some 600*l.* or 700*l.* from

the correspondents ; it is confidently believed he is now in Madrid. Beware of him. Should he present himself at your office, give immediate information to the police. He is six feet high, black beard, commanding presence, and grand air. Speaks Spanish like a native.'

"I handed it back to poor Tal with a sigh. I sincerely felt for him ; if we had only known this the day before, what a capture we might have made ! However, it was no good crying over spilled milk, so I advised Tal to telegraph down to Sevilla to his correspondent and warn him, in case the General had gone that road. Tal took my advice and did so, but too late ; the General had presented himself that morning in Sevilla, received 500!, and left the town again."

The remainder of the story was told me by an intimate friend who was in Malaga at the time this conclusion took place.—It appears that the General bethought him *en route* from Sevilla to Malaga, that General Plantagenet Harrison was becoming too well-known a character, and that he had better disappear for the present. On his arrival in Malaga, he took a private carriage and drove to the quarters of the capitán-general of the city, whose character he had, no doubt, previously ascertained. He was granted an audience, and on the entrance of the capitán-general the following conversation took place :—

Capitan—"I am very much at the disposition of your worship. In what manner can I serve you ?"

The Unknown—"Be seated, Señor Caballero" (said in a *regal* manner).

The Capitan obeyed with reverence, whilst the Unknown delivered himself as follows :—

"I have lately been travelling through England and France: now I have come into your country, which I find pleasant and agreeable. I have suffered so much in England and France from state receptions, orations, court etiquette, &c. &c., that I determined, on arrival in Spain, to travel entirely incognito, and enjoy your country in peace and quiet. Still I only think it due to you, the capitán-general of Malaga, to tell you, on condition that you keep it strictly secret, that Prince —— (here he mentioned the name of a well-known Russian prince of the blood) is staying in your town."

The capitan was perfectly overwhelmed with delight and vanity. He positively refused to allow the prince (for so we must call him now) to leave the house, his baggage must be sent for, the best rooms given up to him ; in fact, he must be the capitan's honoured guest for as long as he would stay. After refusing for some time the prince at last consented, under the strict conditions of secrecy, which the capitan faithfully promised him. No sooner, however, had the old gentleman seen the prince snugly settled in his best room, than he ordered out his carriage and made a triumphal tour to the houses of all the chief men of Malaga, to announce the capture of such a rare bird as Prince ——. Great was the excitement, and the governor was obliged to premise an

invitation to most of them to prevent their immediately coming to pay their respects.

The capitán-general next morning, with great diffidence, announced to the prince that a few friends were coming to dinner, hoping the prince would not refuse to dine with them; if so he should have his dinner served in a private room. The prince, however, was most gracious, and would be happy to make the acquaintance of the capitán's friends. On entering the salon in the evening, he found some ten or a dozen gentlemen, all dressed either in uniform or court-dress, who received him with the most profound bows and courtesy, which he acknowledged with gracious dignity. The dinner went off very pleasantly, and towards the end the capitán, turning to the prince, said: "I have a very good box at the opera, and we have a very fair company performing now; will you look in this evening?"

The prince would be delighted; so after dinner the capitán and his principal friends escorted the prince to the opera. I need hardly say that the news was all over Malaga, and that the house was crowded, every one knowing the secret. The prince sat in the back of the box, for fear any one should recognize him (a very true excuse,) but listened to the music with much pleasure.

It was between the second and third act that a knock came at the door of the box, and an aide-de-camp entered with a note, which he handed to the capitán. It was a telegraph from the capitán-general at Sevilla, warning his friend of the departure from that town of a celebrated English swindler, &c. &c., very much in fact the same that Señor Tal had received. Seeing that the prince was looking on rather inquisitively, the capitán turned to him and said, "In your travels did you ever happen to hear of a celebrated swindler who calls himself General Plantagenet Harrison?"

"Swindler?" ejaculated the prince in a tone of thunder; the capitán replied by handing him the telegraph. The prince read it with perfect coolness, and handed it back again, accompanied with a most significant shrug of the shoulders. On being pressed by the capitán, he turned to him, and laying his hand on his arm, he said in an impressive voice, "Señor Capitán-General, General Plantagenet Harrison is a very dear and intimate friend of my own; we have often been mistaken for brothers, so strong is the likeness between us, and I may say we love each other like brothers. I will only say one thing more, he is certainly one of the most influential and important people in England. If, through some foolish mistake of your police you lay hands on him, I will not answer for the consequences."

So saying the prince took up his lorgnette and fixed his attention on the boxes opposite. The unfortunate capitán immediately tore the telegraph in pieces, and said to the aide-de-camp, "Go directly and telegraph back that I know, from most reliable sources, that General Plantagenet Harrison is one of the most respected persons in England,

and tell them to beware what they are doing or some dreadful imbroglio will take place." The aide-de-camp withdrew, and the capitán congratulated himself upon the fortunate circumstance that should have given him his information.

. The opera over, the company dispersed at the door of the house, and the evening ended pleasantly without any more interruption. The next day the chief of police waited on the capitán, and in a lengthy interview showed him clearly how completely he had been cheated; but it was not till he produced a photograph, in addition to the most minute personal description, that the poor capitán would give in. The chief of police, however, left him with this piece of comfort—"I have received no warrant to apprehend him, or orders; I am certain to do so before the close of the day; get rid of him then before that time, and without a scandal."

The capitán was only too anxious to do so, and after a little deliberation he formed his plan. He first sent down to the barracks and ordered a troop of Lancers to be ready in two hours' time to escort a distinguished foreigner to Gibraltar. He then jumped into his carriage and drove to the houses of those friends who were in the secret of the prince's presence in Malaga, and informed them, with a most woe-begone face, that the prince had received letters that morning of the most important character, which compelled him to leave for Gibraltar that day.

"Que lastima!" exclaimed his friends.

"Yes, indeed," continued the governor; "it is most unfortunate. I had hoped to have showed him Malaga, but what can I do? He must go. I have ordered a troop of the Lancers to escort him; I cannot do more."

With this tale, various shrugs of the shoulders and many sighs, the capitán amused his friends, and returned to the residencia. He had now to face the prince. After all, the old capitán was not so very dull; indeed for the way in which he got out of his difficulty, without being laughed at by his neighbours, was very creditable. He ascended the stairs, no doubt with a heavy heart, knocked at the prince's door—entered, and found the prince reading and smoking a choice havanna. The following conversation is reported to have taken place:

Capitán. "Ah! what a loss, sire; how grieved I am that you should be compelled to leave us!"

Prince. (Turning round in his chair and looking at him.) "Eh; what do you say, Señor?"

Capitán. "I repeat, sire, how grieved I am that important despatches should compel you to leave for Gibraltar to-day."

Prince. "I have received no despatches!"

Capitán. "Pardon me, sire; we have both received despatches, and I know that your despatches are so important that you will leave in one hour for Gibraltar."

Prince. "Ah! well, I see it is impossible to conceal anything from the capitán-general of Malaga; it is true, I must leave."

Capitan. "Then your royal highness will be ready in an hour?"

Prince. "Yes; in an hour or less."

So ended the interview, during which the prince had taken the hint so cleverly given him by the old capitan, who never relaxed for one moment from his respect and courtesy. In an hour's time a troop of Lancers trotted up to the door, an orderly leading a spare horse. The neighbours and lookers-on in the streets had the satisfaction of seeing the capitan-general bring his friend carefully down to the door, hold the stirrup for him whilst he mounted, and stand bowing at the door as long as the little troop was in sight. A quarter of an hour after, the officer who commanded the troop opened his orders, and found these words: "Guard carefully the prisoner; take him to Gibraltar; hand him over to the English authorities." The prince was placed in the centre of the troop, and was trotted sharply along. At Gibraltar, according to instructions, he was handed over to the English authorities, who knew nothing, and cared less about him; accordingly he was next day released, and, I believe, took his passage for England some few days afterwards, having enjoyed the society and hospitality of the Rock first.

Every one who has visited Spain knows what a lottery-mad people they are in that country. The Queen used (I suppose she does still) always to take the Nos. from 1 to 20 regularly every month, as one takes the *Cornhill* in England. All play: high and low, rich and poor. Don Ricardo had spent a small fortune in tickets, and though he had never won, continued to spend all his spare cash in tickets, convinced he would win the large prize some day. He was always trying to persuade one to buy, and I remember him stopping Lord E—— one night in the street, and begging him to buy a ticket from a blind man.

"Such luck!" he ejaculated, "just twelve o'clock and a blind beggar!"

Lord E——, however, refused to be tempted. Don Ricardo spent a whole afternoon with us one day in beseeching us to buy tickets.

"What fortunes you are throwing away; why, Englishmen are proverbially lucky," &c. &c.

When he left us, he certainly had succeeded in making us feel that it would be a pity to leave Madrid without just trying our luck once, so we agreed to go and buy a ticket the next morning. As we were going to our rooms, I turned to Lord E—— and said, "I tell you what it is; I'll dream of a number."

"Do," he laughingly said. So saying we banged our doors. I undressed and went to bed, and very soon forgot all about lotteries, Spain, and everything else—till some three or four hours after, I awoke with one of those starts, to which I suppose we are all familiar, and found myself sitting up in bed repeating a number in a loud voice,—18,481. It was a good big number to pitch upon, wasn't it? I got under the clothes again, and chuckled to myself. I own that at that moment if any one had offered me 1,000*l.* for my chance I don't think I should have accepted, for I felt as

certain as a man could feel that 18,481 was a winning number. Early in the morning I shuffled over to Lord E——'s room and told him of my number. He was much amused, but rather taken with the idea; "anyhow," he said "it'll do as well as any other one."

When, however, we told Don Ricardo during the course of the day, he was perfectly insane on the subject. "What luck!" he cried; "why, it's a certainty. Oh! we must send all over Spain for it."

I ought perhaps to say, that at the commencement of every month a certain number of tickets are sent to each town throughout Spain,—according to the size of the town, so many tickets. On inquiry at the lottery office we found that 18,481 had gone to Badajoz, which Don Ricardo immediately declared to be a very lucky town: he knew in fact where the large prizes had been won for the last twenty years, and I daresay the names of the winners. He then announced to us that some one must be sent to Badajoz directly to buy this ticket, and even proposed to go himself. However, when we came to discuss the subject quietly, we represented to him that very likely the ticket would be sold when he got there, then the difficulty of finding the purchaser, and lastly, supposing all the rest done, the almost impossibility of getting the owner of 18,481 to surrender his prize for anything like a fair price—for his suspicions that it was a lucky ticket would be immediately aroused when he found we wanted to purchase it. Taking all these things into consideration, we decided that 18,481 should take its chance, and that we would have no ticket at all. Before the lottery was drawn, Lord E—— and I left Madrid for Seville. Directly the winning numbers are known they are telegraphed all over Spain, and posted up in the most conspicuous places. It was about ten days after this, that coming home from the opera one evening, we stopped under an archway, and under an oil lamp read the list of winning numbers just posted up. Well! I don't ask any one to believe it, but there was 18,481 as large as life. I don't try to account for it. I can't! Don Ricardo's state of mind is better imagined than expressed. What a letter he wrote!

Here in Seville we made the acquaintance of Jose Rodriguez, who met his death shortly afterwards in the Plaza at Madrid. He was better known to his friends as Pepe. He was certainly one of the most cool and daring fellows in the ring I ever saw. I remember Lord E—— saying to him one day, "You'll be killed, to a certainty, Pepe, if you don't take more care of yourself."

"Well, Señor Conde," he replied, "if we are not killed sometimes, bull-fighting would very soon come to an end."

Here too we met Dominguez, who was still fighting, though with only one eye. His escape was really marvellous. He had fallen in trying to escape the charge of a bull, and immediately lay (as torreadors always do,) perfectly quiet. The bull snuffed at him, and gave a dig at his head with one horn, which was rather curved: it drove into the mouth of Dominguez, carrying away two or three teeth, and then up and out of the

eye. The horn was then withdrawn, and the bull galloped off without doing him further damage. This is a well-known fact, and I daresay some who read this may have been eye-witnesses to the same. He was a clever and powerful torreador, but evidently suffered much from the loss of his eye; the chance of the bull getting on his blind side kept him constantly fidgety. There is no doubt that it tends greatly to the excitement of a bull-fight if you have personal friends amongst the torreadors. At Puerto Santa Maria, poor Pepe honoured Lord E—— by the ceremony of what is called "toasting," or devoting the death of the bull to you. The matador always does it to the chief person in the Plaza: at Madrid the Queen, or occupiers of the royal box; in other towns the governor or capitán-general. Great was the surprise in the grandee box at seeing Pepe march up the ring and stand in front of two unknown Englishmen, whilst he made the pretty flowery speech which the matador makes before killing the bull. Of course when the bull dropped nearly in front of us, Lord E—— flung him his purse. Next morning we had an article in the paper headed "Entusiasmo Extraordinario," in which it related how an Englishman, carried away by excitement, had flung a purse containing five *ounces* of gold to the lucky matador.

Before concluding this paper, I should like to give a derivation for those who are fond of them,—one I have so often heard given wrongly, that I should like to correct it. Ask most people what the derivation of John Dory (the fish) is, and they will tell you it is Jean-Doré, the French Golden John. Now this is obviously wrong, when, if you ask a fishmonger in Paris for a Jean-Doré, he does not know what you mean. The true derivation then is this: the name of the fish in Spain is "Janitore," so named after St. Peter, who is the Janitor or Porter of Heaven; it is the fish which he pulled up with the tribute-money. The fish also bears his thumb-mark in its head. So easily—please pronounce it in Spanish, Janitore—Jean Dory! John Dory! One more and I have done. The name of moustache in Spanish is "Bigotes." Why? The German mercenaries were the first who wore them and introduced them into Spain—they were employed a great deal at auto-da-fés and tortures of the Inquisition. So *Bigots*, our own word.

The old Loves of our Lovers.

To a man of sense and spirit the manner in which he should bear himself towards the old loves of his love, whether that love be the woman he wants to marry or the woman he has married, presents a social problem for solution of no ordinary difficulty. But, alas! we are not all, we are not even many of us, men of sense and spirit, and therefore we advance with careless courage to the contest with three great deficiencies—ignorance of the value of the stake, of our own incapacity for this particular form of warfare, and with a profound underestimate of the delicacy and difficulty of the task which lies before us. Of course we do not like the old love, in whatever shape he appears. Some of the more ill-natured among us feel a certain resentment that a woman honoured by our affection should ever have entertained an emotion for any one else, and the slightest display of sentiment in his behalf rankles in our ungenerous minds. In truth, we are seldom so angry as when any one for whom we in our hearts care for omits to dislike those whom we have either loudly or silently excommunicated; but it is possible to acquire a mental habit of magnanimity, and in most cases it is worth while to try for it, if only for the serenity of body and mind it confers. A toothless enmity, which moans in plain English a fit of the sulks, is always and under any circumstances a gigantic blunder. In savage life, of course, the thing would be easy enough. We should dance our war-dance round him, and then, with horrid screams, cut his throat. Fortunately or unfortunately, this mode is no longer practicable; in this our day we rage inwardly, say rude things, and end, figuratively speaking, by cutting our own. The first thing to be done is to study the situation with humility, intelligence, assiduity, and courage. In this country most husbands and many lovers would think it beneath them to devote time and trouble to this matter, but in such a case *le jeu vaut bien la chandelle*. An affection that has been worth winning is surely worth keeping; and we may say at once that for the English system, or rather want of system, we entertain no sympathy or respect. Besides, there is a certain deficiency of control of temper about it, and ill-temper and ill-breeding are mostly found together. Balzac has said, "Avant de se marier il faut avoir au moins disséqué une femme;" and taking his speech in the metaphorical acceptation in which he used it, and in the same critical sense, there is a deep significance in it. One woman will be like the Van Arteveldes, the "stuff of which to make a storm-sail." Her you can only disarm by never suffering a storm to arise which shall convince her of her own value. Of another one may say, "C'est un accouchement pour elle que de

se déterminer." We generally love the last kind best, only absence tries them too much, for, like delicate flowers, they require much tending. Of course no account is to be made of those early spasmoid attacks of the tender passions which are born in silence and endured in secret, and are indeed but the faint foreshadowings of love, such as some boys and most school-girls experience. There are few girls who have not entertained a personal idolatry, or indulged in some kind of craze, unrequited and unsuspected, for their clergymen or music-master, as the case may be, wife and many children notwithstanding. There is no occasion to discuss these further than to say that they should be allowed to sink into oblivion, and never be made the subject of ridicule. No woman will thank us for reminding her of her infantine foibles, and Cherubino forgets all about the Countess when he grows up, and has learned to understand the real burden of his song, *Voi che sapete*. The old loves we mean are those of more mature years, when love may be supposed to have been really comprehended and experienced, and it is no use a man flinching at the idea that the woman he hopes to marry has ever had a previous love. Even if the reverse case could be proved, it ought to be no sort of comfort, but rather an omen of future disaster. There are persons who never fall in love at all, but as a rule there are none who do it only once in their lives. For a man then to hold his own in the presence of the old love, he must clothe himself in a triple armour of politeness, patience, and magnanimity, and must pledge himself to endure in the present, in order that he may enjoy in the future. Often a bold policy is successful, for the domain of sentiment in the female breast has, practically speaking, no limits, and to present the shadow in the flesh is sometimes sufficient to destroy a potent and cherished illusion. "Madam," a gentleman once said, "I bring your idol to you in order that you may view him near." This kind offeat must be performed courageously, for the slightest appearance of fear or *malaise* is fatal to its efficacy; gently, for it may be a death which we are about to witness; and with presence of mind, since, alas! it may prove to be the resuscitation of an *agonisant* or of a corpse which we shall actually see. If we perceive, however, that the issue is about to be a fatal one, and that our destiny calls us to act as the executioner, we have, at any rate, the right to wear gloves and a black mask. Nor let us be angry if, when the death-warrant is pronounced, we detect a tone of sorrow in the voice which utters it. At the demolition of a former idol, or the perishing of an ancient faith, a natural pang or two may be allowed to those who once believed in them. Suavity and indulgence at such a moment are the best wisdom, and *l'amour pardonne tout, l'amour propre ne pardonne rien*. But boldness must not degenerate into carelessness. He is the old love, and we are the new we think; and calling to mind the natural inconstancy proverbially attributed to women, we feel sure of triumph. But the worst of it is this inconstancy is never to be relied on at the opportune moment when it would be to our advantage that it should be exercised, and we even think that their failing in this respect has been

greatly exaggerated, if indeed it exists at all. "Constancy is one of the chief vices of women," said a man who had spent a long life in trying to understand them, "and nothing cures them of it: nothing," he added sadly, "except matrimony." Again, our star may be in the ascendant. But a woman often favours a losing cause, not out of contradiction, but from compassion, provided the failure be not of an ignominious sort. But if it is conspicuously due to certain faults not easily forgiven by women in men, such as meanness, conceit, or cowardice, we may be easy, for whether we remain the victor or not, we know that he will assuredly prove the loser. To some women perfect trust is felt to be the greatest, indeed the only acceptable homage; others regard a little anxiety, an inquisitiveness with respect to their motives and proceedings almost amounting to jealousy as a proper tribute to their influence. In investigations there is *le style coupé*, of surprises into an admission, a recompence, or a regret; and *le style soutenu*, which is sometimes a prolonged dumb interrogatory carried on directly by the eye, or in the passive and negative form it consists in an obstinate withholding of all the usual tokens of affection and confidence. This often elicits an exhaustive and exhausting confession, exhausting that is to the penitent, sometimes also to the confessor. In such cases we must not fail to consult our own interests before we accord absolution, bearing in mind how it has been said that the inhabitants of Asia came to be vassals only because they were not able to pronounce the single monosyllable, No.

We are taking it that the old love is of the male sex. If married he is almost sure, at least in England, to be innocuous. Few of us care to present ourselves to our old loves after a lapse of ten or twelve years. The highly favoured among us have perhaps been able to preserve our figure, but generally we have increased in girth, the soft voice and small assiduities by which we were once so distinguished have departed from us, and the effort to resume them is a grievous and not always a successful one to make. We have become prosaic and comfortable, sometimes hard and vicious, or dull and greedy, and the signs thereof are written on our persons and in our countenances. When the old love is thus degenerate we have only to dissimulate our joy at seeing him approach the object of our solicitude. We knew instinctively that he is about to reveal himself to our advantage, and we hasten to be cordial to him and to assist him in the celebration. While he is descanting on the wealth he has accumulated, and the prosperity and happiness he enjoys, we know that he is becoming less dangerous every moment, and the enshrined mystery is developing into the commonplace acquaintance. While he thinks he is making an excellent impression by his unceremonious and careless allusions to former days, or perhaps in still worse taste, by his boasting of more recent conquests, or present prospects with regard to other women, we are sure he is secretly exciting horror and indignation. He is about to commit a moral suicide, with which we are not called upon to interfere, and we must be more or less than man if we contemplate the

prospect with anything short of serene satisfaction. But we must be wary of displaying this unchristian spirit, nay, a little occasional effort to save him, or to throw a shield over his defects and follies, will not injure us ; only it must not be made too perceptibly. The smallest endeavour to make a woman have less cause for humiliation in her old love will be seen and appreciated by her. We may, however, be mistaken in our calculations if we suppose that because for the old love there is so cold a December, there will be at any rate just then a warmer June for us. It is Richter who affirms that often the smiles and tenderness a woman bestows on one man are really called forth by her reflections about another ; and consequently the hostile and regretful feelings excited by *him* and kept in reserve, may sooner or later, but mostly sooner, fall to our share. If we are well aware that there has been an old love affair between the woman we are or wish to be engaged to and any person into whose society she is thrown, we shall know, not indeed how much, but whether there is anything to fear by observing their reticence, or the reverse, with respect to the days that are past. If they never refer to them at all, they are most certainly thinking about them. If they talk of the matter only when they are alone, there is a decided consciousness and probably a disposition to enter into temptation. But if they allude to it freely before a third party, there is little, most likely nothing, to apprehend. With a slender, good-looking, unmarried old love, whose ambition has been not only to be, but to continue agreeable to women, great care is necessary, especially if we stand in no better position than that of an engaged man, for a husband has always an immense advantage in love-making, provided he knows how to avail himself of it. There are some moments when a woman ought not to be made to wait either for a word or a glance, for a provocation or a caress ; and the husband only can have constant access to the wife. But it may be that his evil genius, or his idle dull understanding, shall guide him to choose the inopportune instant, or that, with the best intentions, he does what he thinks *& propos* in the wrong way ; and this is doubly unfortunate, because the manner in which a thing is done is, in nine cases out of ten, and especially with delicate and refined natures, of more consequence than the thing itself.

In an old French drama a disreputable cardinal is made to say, " Marriage is certainly the heaviest chain which can be fastened on a man," and the equally disreputable abbé replies, " For which reason there are two to carry it, (takes a pinch of snuff) sometimes three." But it should be the pride and settled purpose of every man to show himself equal to bear gaily and gallantly the burden of any fetter which he has himself forged, and this we must do as well as we can and how we may, for " a purpose wedded to plans often comes to be shipwrecked," but if a purpose is steadily followed up by such means and as opportunity offers or circumstances admit, it will almost certainly be attained. In one of Bulwer's novels he relates how a German prince aspired to assist Sir

Sedley Beaudesert in bearing the weight of the matrimonial chain, and how Sir Sedley devoted all his time and talents to defeat him, made love to his own wife, supported her, encouraged her, overpowered the prince by his politeness and cordiality, outdid him in munificence, beat him at his own game, turned him into ridicule, and finally put him out of fashion. The prince had not the advantage of having been previously preferred, and therefore the case is not wholly in point, but it illustrates how the thing is to be done. Of course a man can in law and in fact command the obedience of his wife and order out of his house any person who causes him uneasiness, but if this is the best he can do, the affection which custom and conventionality compel her to simulate is but the painful civility and forced smiles of the helpless debtor towards a powerful creditor. After all, the victory must first be won by ourselves over our own impatience, indolence, and stupidity. We remember a pretty story of a French marquis who chased an old love fairly out of his wife's heart, and while she was morally shivering with cold and fear at the ghost of her own imagination, he dispelled it by surrounding her with light and warmth. For her he foresaw all annoyances and smoothed all difficulties, reproached her without afflicting her, doubled the value of any token of affection by the way in which he offered it, never embarrassed her pride, wounded her vanity, or offended her tastes; he was tender at the precise moment when tenderness was, not most demanded, but most desired, flattered her by his actions more than by his words, conveyed a caress in a glance of the eye, or in the tone of his voice, in fact *il chatouillait toujours le cœur* (there is no English expression which will convey the meaning of that sentence), and of course at last reigned triumphantly as it must be owned such men deserve to do. These things do not cost us much to do, or to give, and that which we receive in return is in value immeasurably beyond the small sacrifices we may have had to make.

All this regards men; but when the old love is a woman, everything becomes more complex and dangerous, not because women are more wicked than men, but because they are more subtle, and also more charming. Here the conditions are reversed. No woman need fear her lover, or any wife her husband meeting his old love, if she is still unmarried, after half-a-dozen years or more. Single women are apt to fade. Now it seems horrid to admit, but the thing ought to be said, and therefore we will say it. There is between a woman and a man's way of regarding an old love this notable difference. A woman will rejoice generously in his success and prosperity if only he refrains from parading them before her. She will be glad if he retains his good looks, and will be influenced not so much by the dominion he has over her as the sway she sees him exercise over others. Every single advantage he retains will help her to justify herself to herself when she remembers the past. But a man is prone to experience a certain vexation if his old love should venture to be either happy or successful after he has left her, or she him,—he feels it almost as a personal affront; whereas when he observes that she has faded, the sight

administers to the vanity of his depraved nature. He thinks that if matters had turned out differently he could have made it otherwise for her ; he does not wonder at her altered looks, quite the reverse, but they afford him a vague and rather grim satisfaction wholly apart from love. On the other hand, single women sometimes console themselves and thrive. We say "console themselves," because we are now instructed that if women fail to marry there is no one thing which can at the best do more for them than teach them resignation or afford consolation,—a consolation which we like to believe imperfect, and a resignation we do not care to distinguish from despair. But whether they fade or they flourish for the reasons assigned, they never present the same fascinations that won hearts for them formerly. But a married woman is often more delightful, genial, and even handsome at thirty than she was at twenty years of age. Sometimes, also, more addicted to flirtation. Especially is this the case when she is childless. Unconsciously she may do a great deal of mischief. Consciously she may do a great deal more. Anything of this kind going on may be easily detected by a bystander if he notices between the two women an excess of apparent cordiality with very little reality in it. Here again the conditions are reversed ; for an unmarried woman can contest the influence of an old love over her lover better than a wife can with her husband. There are the worries inseparable to a household of servants, children, and expenditure, which tend to harass and perplex her in her efforts. An appeal to the generosity of one woman by another is rarely effectual unless made by a person wise enough to stoop in order that she may conquer, to one whose conscience is less elastic than her temperament.

But here we pause, almost repenting of our audacity in offering guidance and teaching to the sex which, after all, in such matters divines in an instant what we after much time and study only dimly apprehend. One kind of old love, indeed, there is with which we are sometimes called upon to contend. We have not alluded to these, though our subject would be incomplete without it. Yet they are of all others the most hopeless to strive with, and cause sometimes discontent, sometimes despair. These are shadows or shades, and are the worst, for we cannot destroy them or make them expose themselves.

The faults of a defunct husband are generally patent to the world and to his wife, and those of a rejected suitor are commonly recognized by the woman he has loved so long as he is alive to remind of them ; but we can neither defeat nor deny the secret fascination once exercised by a man now dead.

Two Great Cities.

(BY AN AMERICAN.)

NEW YORK.

SEVEN hundred and twenty-six thousand three hundred and eighty-six human beings lie down to sleep in the city of New York and rise up to eat ; * and not one of these thousands produces a grain of food. Yet to eat is what they desire above all other things. Of these 726,886 human beings, there are 38,056 more females than males. It follows, therefore, that all are not and cannot be married. Indeed, it appears from the last census that 428,121 persons in this city are not married.†

The question will be asked, Why are these people in so unnatural and dangerous a condition ? The answer is most complex ; and no two persons would give the same reply. Nevertheless the *principal* reason is precisely, because they do not wish to raise the food they eat.

Not only is there no food produced in the city of New York, but water to drink has to be brought some forty miles ; and the bursting of a pipe across the High Bridge at the Harlem River would produce a temporary panic. Sixty millions of gallons of water come daily pouring into the city, through great pipes of masonry forty miles long, tapping the Croton River ; which water the people drink and waste. These Croton water-works have cost about 80,000,000 dolls. ; and for the use of the water they now pay every year about 1,000,000 dolls. ; which, added to the interest on the cost, makes near 8,000,000 dolls. annually,—that is what water costs in New York. But it is not only this 8,000,000 dolls.-worth of water that they drink ; there are, under the new licence law, some 7,000 grog-shops, ‡ which dispense every kind of drink, except water, known under the sun. As there are about 8,000,000 gallons of whisky § brought into the city yearly, besides what is made there and what is brought from Europe, it follows that the people do not go dry. * But, in

* United States census of 1860 gave a population of 805,658. It is probably (January 1, 1867) as much as 850,000.

† Census of 1865 :—Males, white, 340,036 ; males, coloured, 4,129 ; females, white, 376,407 ; females, coloured, 5,814 ; total population, 726,886. Civil condition :—Single, 428,121 ; married, 263,727 ; widowers, 7,884 ; widows, 32,684. Voters :—Native, 51,500 ; naturalized, 77,475 : total, 128,975. Aliens, 151,838 ; coloured persons not taxed, 8,899 ; number of families, 148,683 ; owners of land, 11,375 ; over 21, who cannot read and write, 19,199.

‡ Including King's, Queen's, and Richmond counties.

§ 71,909 barrels for 1855-56.—*Corn Exchange Tables*.

addition to the water and the whisky, there is imported from foreign countries a vast amount of wine, brandy, gin, rum, arrack, cordials, and other curious preparations, to induce the people of New York to drink; and they do drink to an incredible extent. The importations of these articles into the United States for the year ending June 30, 1866, amounted to 6,092,000 dolls. Add to these,—

| | Dollars. |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Teas | 11,116,623 |
| Coffee..... | 19,732,381 |
| Sugar..... | 49,596,000 |
| Tobacco and Cigars..... | 4,000,000 |
| Total | <u>90,537,004</u> |

These luxuries, of course, are not all consumed in New York; but it is significant when one-fifth of the whole imports is of this character.

In connection with this matter of eating and drinking comes in the item of ice. The sale of this article of luxury is in the hands of a few (some eight) companies, who control great means, and fix such a price for this commodity as they think the public will bear. These companies have a capacity for housing 619,000 tons, and stored for the consumption of 1867 about 504,000 tons. The retail price is about half a cent per pound.

The population of New York implicitly rely upon having enough to eat every day of their lives, and yet they do not produce one ounce of food. Wheat is grown and flour is made in Tennessee and Wisconsin, and Minnesota and Illinois, and Missouri and Maryland; and some 4,000,000 barrels of flour* and 9,000,000 bushels of wheat† come to the city of New York annually. And so with everything else. There is not an ox in Texas, a hog in Kentucky, a grouse in Iowa, a sheep in Vermont, a woodcock in Jersey, a chicken in Bucks county, an egg in Nebraska, an oyster in the Chesapeake, a shad in the Savannah, a smelt in Maine, an apple in the whole thirty-six States of the Union, which may not arrive at the supreme felicity of being eaten by some one of the 726,896 good people, whose happiness it is to live in the city of New York.

The consumption of food is almost incredible, in figures. Allow a pound of flour daily to each person, and we have a yearly consumption of flour, 265,000,000 lbs.; of meat, half a pound to each person, yearly, 182,565,445 lbs.; of whisky, half a gill to each person, yearly, 4,142,805 gallons.

And what do these little items cost?

| | Dollars. |
|---|-------------------|
| 265,000,000 lbs. of flour at 7 dolls. a barrel | 18,550,000 |
| 182,000,000 lbs. of meat at 15 dolls. ditto | 19,800,000 |
| 4,000,000 gallons of whisky at 2 dolls., (the amount of the tax alone) | 8,000,000 |
| Total | <u>46,350,000</u> |

* 8,893,752 barrels in 1865-66.—*Corn Exchange Tables*.

† 8,727,216 bushels in 1865-66.—*Ib.*

As there are in the city 160,000 families, this alone comes to about 250 dolls. to each family. Meat and whisky are probably under-estimated. But whisky, if a man takes but two "drinks" a day at ten cents. each, costs the snug sum of soventy-three dollars per year to the drinker.

Add to the above a few items, which may be classed as luxuries or superfluities, or worse, and we have,—

| | Dollars. |
|--|-----------|
| Tea and coffee, 1 doll. a week to each family..... | 160,000 |
| Tobacco, 2 dolls. a week to each family | 320,000 |
| Wines and whisky, 2 dolls. a week to each family | 320,000 |
| Bugles 2 dolls. a week to each family | 320,000 |
| | |
| Total..... | 1,120, 00 |

Some 55,000,000 dolls. a year for these little luxuries.

But beside what human creatures eat, there is a consumption by other animals daily of oats, 80,000 bushels, corn, 20,000 bushels, or some 18,000,000 bushels yearly.

How does all this food go there? and how is it paid for? To answer the first is possible in a degree; the last it is impossible to answer,—we can only give a clue.

There was once a saying in Europe, that "all roads lead to Rome." All roads in America lead to New York. Some 82,000 miles * of iron rails stretch out over the land, extending from the Kennebeck river to the Colorado mountains, and upon these the iron horse which never tires is dragging, day and night the live-long year, heavy loads of food, all of which *tends* to the great cities, a great part of which reaches New York. The beautiful New England coast is full of little bays and inlets, and from every one dart out sloops and schooners laden with food for the hungry New Yorkers. They come, too, from the coast as far down as Florida; and from the isles of Bermuda they bring potatoes, from Cuba oranges, from Smyrna figs, from Turkey prunes, from Newfoundland fish. The great Erie Canal also pours in its wealth of food, and the broad bosom of the Hudson is covered with boats and barges, hastening forward with it for the use of the city. But when it arrives, it has not yet got to the millions of hungry mouths. What then?

Washington and Fulton markets are the great distributing centres. Do not visit them; they are shabby, slovenly, dirty, vile, and a disgrace to New York. But somebody gets from their rentals 100,000 dolls. a year; and somebody will violently oppose any change. From the early hour of three o'clock in the morning until noon, every day of the year excepting Sundays, a throng of waggons, trucks, and carts crowd and swear and collide, everybody busily intent, amidst all the confusion, on furnishing breakfasts and dinners to the expectant citizens. And so New York is fed day by day.

* In 1860, 50,798 miles.

How is all this food paid for? Here is a great question, which it is impossible to answer. We can only indicate and suggest. But the reader must bear it in mind, that the smartest men and women get to great cities, and that their great purpose is to get other people's money, fairly or foully.

The great occupation of man in the country is to raise food from the earth. What are the occupations of people in cities? Let us look at *Wilson's Business Directory* for the year 1866-7. It contains 558 pages of names, making from 22,000 to 25,000 persons or firms, who are engaged in 1,100 different trades, professions, or occupations in the city of New York. These 25,000 employ many hands; and range from judges on the bench to vermin-exterminators,—from great publishers to Masonic emblem-makers, of whom there is recorded *none*. It may be curious to know what profession enlists the largest numbers. The business of *drinking* comes first! The wine and liquor dealers are as many as 8,950. Eating comes next. Grocers, about 2,950; butchers, about 1,800; bakers, about 650; confectioners, about 800. Then come,—lawyers, about 2,000; brokers (all kinds), about 1,550; doctors, about 1,150; druggists (their providers), about 450; boot and shoemakers, about 1,600: tailors, about 1,000. But the hair-dressers, 550, about equal the clergymen, who number 556; cigar-dealers number 850; and tobacconists some 209. It is well to note that nearly all of these leading professions produce absolutely nothing. This does not mean that they are useless members of the community by any means. We know well what great good many of them do, and that they may be of value in many ways to the real wealth-producers of the world.

But there are two other classes in New York, of whom it is necessary to say a few words. There are some 1,500 *professional thieves* in the city.* These all eat, and in some cases at least grow rich. A retired thief died not long since in Brooklyn, worth 60,000 dollars.; and one is now living respectably in the city, who is worth at least as much. It is easy to see how they pay for their food. They are a body of "very capable" men, and range all the way from sneak-thieves to the best-dressed men in the city, who may be found any evening in the bar-rooms of the Metropolitan and other first-class hotels, ready for business. The best of these men never rob women; that class is called "moll-buzzers," and is somewhat despised.

The other class is the *prostitutes*. The number of professional prostitutes known to the police is small, numbering about 8,000; † but this does not in any degree express the number who live in this way. There is no way of obtaining any accurate figures; but those best able to judge believe the number of women who exist by prostitution, publicly and privately, to be some 25,000.

* Estimate of an expert.

† Police report, 2,474; in dance-houses, 300.

Of the other classes who may be called non-producers, such as merchants, brokers, and traders of all kinds, it must be borne in mind that every time they handle food or merchandise of any kind, it is their custom to take toll in the shape of a brokerage or profit; and in this way they get the money which pays for their support.

The merchant class is now a mighty army, and it wields a mighty power. Sitting in his dingy counting-room in Front Street or South Street, one man may be sending out and receiving goods from all quarters of the globe: he may never see or handle an article which he controls, which by a stroke of the pen he consigns to the inhabitants of China, or the citizens of London; but nevertheless he directs currents of trade, which bear countless millions from one country to another, and which may be a blessing or a curse to mankind. We see how opium has debauched and degraded the people of China, how rum has depopulated the islands of the great Pacific. Commerce is not always a blessing.

The merchants in New York dominate all other classes. There are two dealing in dry-goods, each of whose sales, in 1865, amounted to some 70,000,000 dollars. The lawyer, the doctor, the preacher, the professor, the artist, pay court to the merchant, for the merchant it is who controls money and dispenses patronage. New York is one vast market, a perpetual fair, an endless bazaar, to which all the people of the United States come to buy or to sell. The most marked characteristic of the city is an unmeasured activity, a headlong haste, a ceaseless business.

The following figures will in some measure express this characteristic. The foreign and domestic tonnage which entered the port of New York for the year ending June 30, 1866, was 2,697,825; and that which cleared was 2,508,885. Bear in mind that each of these figures represents a ton of merchandise brought here or carried away, and some idea may be formed of the amount of work done and paid for.

For the year 1865 the custom-house returns of merchandise imported into the city exhibit:—imports 219,644,714 dollars.; exports, 209,845,809 dollars.; all of which is paid for by the productions of the soil and the workshop.

The seventy-one banks of the city represent a capital of 85,000,000 dollars.* The daily business at the clearing-house is some 100,000,000 dollars. and has at times risen to 175,000,000 dollars. This approximates to the city's daily business.

It must not be supposed, however, that New York does nothing but buy and sell. The great warehouses and shops are what first strike the eye of the stranger; and the streets thronged with busy men and loaded trucks seem to indicate that the transfer of merchandise from hand to hand is the sole occupation of its inhabitants. But go off the line of Broadway, along the side-streets, and upon both the East and Hudson Rivers, and you will hear the sound of the hammer and the file

* January 1867, 84,797,200 dollars.

—the whirl of mighty machinery, which, with the aid of human hands, is producing—producing—producing, spurred onward by competition, the desire for wealth, and the innate force of industry. Their work is not without vast results; and there are many establishments, grown from the humblest beginnings, which now employ a small army of men and women.

The manufactures of New York city in the year 1860 stood thus:—number of establishments, 4,875; capital invested, 61,212,757 dolls.; cost of raw material, 90,177,088 dolls.; number of hands, males, 65,488, females, 24,721, total 90,204; annual cost of labour, 28,481,915 dolls.; annual value of products, 159,107,869 dolls.

Lest the reader may indulge in the illusion that all the people in a great city ride in carriages and roll in wealth, let us ask attention to a few facts. The year 1863 was, notwithstanding the war, a prosperous year to the people of the Northern States; and while surpassed by the year 1864, it was doubtless equal to the average.

In the year 1863, according to the report of the internal revenue department, 18,084 persons only, out of the whole population of the city, paid a tax on incomes over 5,000 dolls.; of these five paid on incomes above 500,000 dolls., and one on an income of 1,848,637 dolls. The whole amount of the incomes of these 18,084 as reported was 82,287,762 dolls. It should be remembered that at this time, as estimated, there were some 160,000 heads of families in this city, so that the proportion having incomes above 5,000 dolls. was very small. In fact the vast majority live on incomes of less than 1,000 dolls., and live in close, cramped, and too often unhealthy quarters; so that of the children born in the city, one-half die before they reach the age of five years. Of the 160,000 families in 1861, only 15,000 occupied a whole house. Some 480,886 of the population live in tenement houses, averaging some seven families to each house. These are in nearly all cases respectable and self-supporting; we then come to a number of 15,214 persons who are the *underground population*. They live in cellars. But this is not all who are wretchedly poor in this city of palaces; 52,258 out-door poor were relieved by charity in the year 1865. The taxable value of the real estate in New York in the year 1865 was 427,860,884 dolls., which must of course be in a comparatively few hands, while the personal estates estimated for taxation was 181,428,471 dolls. The whole property of the city as reported by the assessor, amounted therefore to nearly 609,000,000 dolls. (about 750 dolls. to each person), and this upon an island one and one-half mile wide, and thirteen and a half miles long, which two centuries ago was bought from the Indians for twenty-four dollars! The assessed value of the real estate on Broadway alone, from the Bowling Green to Union Square, is 51,800,000 dolls., excluding all places of public worship and the City Hall Park. Upon this amount a tax of about three per cent. was laid, and the taxes of the year 1865 reached the sum of 18,208,952 dolls.; about twenty-two dollars for each person.

A large part of this is consumed in paying interests, in making streets

and sewers and docks, and other things necessary to a large city ; but it is believed that some two or three millions are acquired by thieves who are not called professional ! A vast sum is required every year to compel the people to behave themselves properly. This is rendered necessary, in a great degree, by the evils consequent upon the grog-shops, which abound here as elsewhere.

The following items we may set down as growing out of these "institutions" in great part, if not wholly :—

| | Dollars. |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Police department | 2,311,556 |
| Salaries and expenses of courts | 649,961 |
| Juvenile asylum | 50,990 |
| Almshouses, &c. | 988,450 |
| Total | 3,900,957 |

or some 4,000,000 dolls. yearly.

That this money is mostly needed to counteract the evils growing out of the grog-shops, we need only turn to the police [reports for illustration, where over one-quarter of the arrests are for intoxication ; and of all arrests made, one-half are of persons born in Ireland. It shows that New York, being the great port of entry for the whole country, has to provide for all the vagabond and vicious who are poured out yearly from the Old World. The vice and crime of New York represent not only her own wickedness, but also a large amount of that generated elsewhere. It requires 2,085 able men to keep the city at peace ; and as a body they are efficient and do their duty fairly. But, by a great misfortune or mis-step, this vast population of vagrant and vicious are allowed to become voters, and are the prey, the tools, of the base and unscrupulous, so that free institutions suffer, and New York has the reputation of being the worst and most corruptly governed city in the universe.

It has been shown how the merchants, the manufacturers, the thieves, and some others win their bread. The three learned professions live by trying to cure or alleviate the evils which men inflict upon themselves, or upon one another. The physician attempts to restore the body to health ; the lawyer to redress the wrongs of person or of property ; the clergyman to palliate the penalties of sin, or to allay the stings of a violated conscience. Their duties are remedial, and for doing them they are entitled to fair wages. A few lawyers, very few, are able to secure incomes of from 20,000 to 50,000 dolls. ; but for this they have worked years, and at the loss of vigour, at the sacrifice of pleasure. The greater number probably earn something between 1,000 and 8,000 dolls. a year. With physicians the same is true in a good degree, though the extremes are not so great.

The clergy receive from 2,000 to 10,000 dollars a year. In a commercial city like New York, a class of men whose life is not active, whose thoughts and studies interest them in some measure in another world than this, is apt to be undervalued by those who are dealing altogether with material things. But the clergy are an educated class, who keep

alive a love of literature, a desire for knowledge, a perception of virtue, a sense that truth is supreme and divine, and a belief that, after all, gold is not God.

There are churches and chapels, of all denominations, 858 ; * and from statistics gathered it seems the communicants number, in the following denominations : Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist, Dutch Reformed and Baptist, an average of 820 to each church, which shows the religious world to comprise but 112,960 persons, in a total population of 726,886. At first this strikes one as portentous. But we may conclude that this 112,966 represents over 56,000 families, averaging four persons each, and this includes a recognized religious population of some 224,774 persons ; more than one-fourth of all. The city is not therefore given over to money-getting, forgetful of all else. Nearly every church assumes to provide for its own poor ; and beside this some eighty-seven benevolent institutions are devoted to alleviating the evils which so far seem to be inseparable from large cities. The people do not intend that any shall starve or grievously suffer, though some do. Nor do they intend that any shall want for a decent school education. It appears, from the Report of the Board of Education for the year 1865, that the city provides 268 schools, and that it spends on them 2,377,988 dolls. ; that there are taught at these schools 206,809 children —of all ages, sexes, and colour. They are taught, nearly all, English studies, and in some of them German and Latin. Is not this doing enough ? Is it not attempting too much ? Such is not the opinion of the superintendent or the majority of voters. One of these public schools has just been erected into a college, where the whole population may learn to read Xenophon, and to comprehend the Calculus. And this, too, in a city where to-day 500 lawyers and doctors can be hired for one-half the wages of a good mason.

Columbia College, with an ample endowment, is, or attempts to be, a university in New York city. But its situation is bad, its buildings poor, and it is overwhelmed by the material influences of the city. It is almost impossible for a boy to be a steady scholar under such influences. An enlightened board of managers would lose no time in considering the propriety of removing it beyond the city limits, and thus begin to build up an Oxford, which—with its literature, its art, its science—would check the tendency to display and riotous expenditure which a city stimulates.

The libraries, public and private, are becoming large and numerous. The most valuable is the "Astor," founded by John Jacob Astor, and enriched by his son. The Mercantile Library is the great reading library of the city, and has some 40,000 to 50,000 books.

Amusements are eagerly sought by a portion of the people ; and, nightly, theatres, concerts, operas, and minstrels are thronged ; but a large proportion of these audiences is made up of strangers and visitors to the

* *City Mission Report, 1867.*

city. It is estimated that some 7,000,000 dolls. a year are spent in this way in New York ; most of which is ill-spent—the amusements are so often dreary.

But the wisdom and liberality of the people has best expressed itself in the Central Park, which, in a few years, has grown up out of the most desolate and abandoned district of the island. Some 700 acres are included in it ; and the visitor can scarcely realize that but eight or nine years ago this spot, now green with soft grass, and gay with bright flowers, where, on a Saturday afternoon, thousands of rich and poor gather to listen to the sounds of music—that this bright and beautiful spot, eight years ago, was a waste, a slough, a desolation ; and yet it was so. The cost of the Park has been some 10,000,000 dolls.,* but none begrudge it ; certainly not the poor, and those who here get their only glimpse of green fields and blooming plants.

Let us compare the past of New York with the present. Lots on the "Great Highway" began to be laid out and granted to the Dutch settlers in the year 1648 ; and Martin Crigier received a pasture lot on the west side, opposite the Bowling Green. This was a desirable lot ; it was near the great fort, between State and Whitehall Streets. Lying above Martin's lot, and towards the spot where Trinity Church now stands, was a burying-ground, well grown up with bushes. Martin was not then quite sure he might not be carried off by Indians, and at night he had fears of wild animals. He had no neighbours north of the fort, but along the East River a few daring men had brick-houses upon their farms ; none were above what is now the line of Wall Street. Could Martin Crigier now revisit his farm, he would find the "Highway" converted into a "Broadway ;" which, starting at his front door, now runs the whole length of New York Island, thence along the Hudson River, through every town, to Albany. He would open his eyes at the tall blocks of stone warehouses which cover the whole surface of his door, yard, and pasture lot ; going up Broadway he would still see a burying-ground, but in its midst the tall stone steeple of Trinity Church,—the best, almost the only good piece of architecture in the city. If he turn down what was in his day the northern limits of the *T'Schaape Wayte* or *Sheep-pasture*, he will be in Wall Street, every foot of which is now worth from 4,000 to 10,000 dolls. He will see on the site of the once City Hall (in front of which stood the stocks, the pillory, and the whipping-post) the present Treasury building, where the transactions amount to millions a day. On this spot the Congress of 1789 assembled, and here Washington was inaugurated first President of the United States.† Beyond this, on either side, the street is lined with massive bank buildings, and here the financial interests of the country find their centre. If he dare to enter

* Cost of ground, 5,028,844 dolls. ; cost of construction, Dec. 31, 1866, 4,986,035 dolls. ; equal to 10,014,879 dolls.

† Washington lived at 8, Cheny Street.

at No. 18, Wall Street, he will hear a horrible din—the yelling of human voices. In a handsome room he will find the human beings from whom the voices proceed, apparently tearing one another to pieces, all screaming at the top of their lungs—old grey heads and beardless young men together. He will tremble lest murder shall be done. But it is not a fight, they are only buying and selling “Erie.” It is the Board of Brokers—the strangest sight in the whole city, if not in the universe. Along the East and Hudson Rivers, as he catches glimpses between the lines of warehouses, he will see forests of branchless trees; they are the masts of ships from every port in the world. As he goes up Broadway, he will pass the Astor House, a gloomy pile of dark granite; the white-marble *Herald* building, costing three-quarters of a million of dollars—built by a capable Scotsman, who established a penny paper here a few years ago; he will come to an open space, in the centre of which stands the handsome City Hall, dedicated to the use of the Government. He will then pass, on his right, a marble warehouse, built by an Irishman, who, beginning with a small tape-store, is now estimated to have got into his hands some 20,000,000 dolls. Farther on, he will come to a mile of tall warehouses, which let for 20,000, 80,000, and 60,000 dolls. per annum; then come the great hotels, the “St. Nicholas” to the left, the “Metropolitan” on the right, where, for five dollars a day, a man can get a place to sleep in and enough to eat. At “Tiffany’s” on the right, and at “Ball and Black’s” on the left, his simple Dutch eyes will be dazzled by the wonderful display of diamonds and pearls, emeralds and rubies, silver and gold; and well may he wonder how they got there, and where they are going to. A million of dollars will not buy the accumulated treasures of either of these shops.

A few streets further on he will come to another great building, and looking through the plate-glass windows, he will see a crowd of frantic women—eager, anxious, worn, fierce. They seem to be worrying a line of pale young men, who contrive to keep them at bay by throwing down before them pieces of muslin, and silk, and lace. They are not trying to destroy these poor young men; they are only trying to get clothes to cover and adorn them. This is “Stewart’s,” and it is by dispensing dry-goods to these distressed women that he has been able to amass his 20,000,000 dolls. Next to the Board of Brokers, this is the strangest sight that Martin Crigier’s ghost can see in New York. These two things mark the extreme “civilization” of the nineteenth century.

A mile beyond this he will reach the great white-marble hotels—the “Fifth Avenue,” the “Albemarle,” the “Hoffman,” the “St. James’s.” Here he will strike the Fifth Avenue, the finest street in the city, where brown stone, white marble, pressed brick, Brunswick stone, are piled into ample mansions, in place of the wigwams that once stood there. Some of these houses may be bought for from 100,000 to 200,000 dolls., few for less than 40,000 dolls. Row after row of these extend along the side-streets on either hand, until they reach the Central Park at

Fifty-ninth Street. Here Martin rarely ventured alone in his day, and when he went it was to kill a wolf or hunt a bear. Now there is a throng; men on foot, men on horseback, women and little children; carriages of every shape and colour, with one horse, two horses, three horses, four horses, six horses, filled with women clad in feathers, in silks, in velvets and laces,—beautiful with imported hair and delicate cosmetics.

It is a gay sight, and Martin Crigier will enjoy it. He will see among the crowd many Jewish noses; and he will see "bears" and "bulls," but they are the wild animals of Stock Exchange. He must not put a bullet into them. But we can go no farther with Martin, who is now in heaven; may his soul rest in peace, and may all this crowd join him!

New York is an open market, in constant traffic—a perpetual fair. Its situation is perfect, its facilities ample, its expansion certain. A long narrow island (the greater part of which is washed by deep navigable waters), every foot of which is available for the habitation of man, lies at the head of New York Bay, one of the most capacious, most perfect harbours in the world. This secures to New York an immense foreign commerce, second only to that of London. But this alone will not make a great city. Before the invention of railroads, the ample Hudson River on the west brought to it the productions of over 160 miles of productive country, and the East River centred at New York the produce of Long Island and New England. In time the Erie Canal brought hither the crops of the whole State, and, through the great lakes, those of the entire and fruitful West. The Delaware, and Hudson, and Morris Canals brought the coal-mines of Pennsylvania to its doors. Then railroads were made, and they all centred in New York. But New York does not consist merely of the people and the acres of Manhattan Island. A circuit of thirty miles in diameter is really all New York city, whose population is mostly engaged in New York. We may add to the population of New York city some half a million more than the census mentions. No population is so fluctuating. The immigrants landed here, between the years 1851 and 1868, were 2,584,671. Then from all quarters come hither the active, the ambitious, the hopeful, the despairing, to try their luck in the great wheel of life. Everything is stimulated to the utmost, and great successes and great failures are the result. The prizes are great, the risks heavy, the temptations strong; and the effect of all this is seen upon character. The men (the ambitious ones who aim high) have a bold, adventurous, daring air which attracts attention. They dress well, eat well, and spend much money—when they can. They do not fear to undertake great enterprises and to incur heavy responsibilities. If they fail, they get up and try again; and some of the most successful are they who have been ruined more than once. They love great houses, and fine horses, and costly furniture; they know little of literature, less of art, but are beginning to believe there is something in them, though what it is, is quite vague. The women are not unlike the men; handsome, stylish, courageous,

and a little reckless. They love clothes, jewels, and "society;" fear the frowns of "Mrs. Grundy," and must live in the enchanted district which lies between the Fourth and Sixth Avenues, Union Square, and the Park. In this fascinating region rents range from 2,000 to 10,000 dollars a year, and the general expenditure must be upon that scale. This of course is what is called the "best society." The extremes are wide apart. The woman of the "best society" has nothing to do but spend money. She is absolutely without occupation, without duty, without care. But, alas! she is human; she has nerves and she has dyspepsia, and she has ungratified ambition; and who can alleviate her sufferings?

"Society," as it is called, is constantly shifting—it is a kaleidoscope. The figures of ten years ago are no longer seen; a few fossils here and there may remain, but the fashionable crowd of ten years since are all departed, gone, gone, no one knows whither, and no one cares. New York is too busy, too eager, to spend any time in useless sentiment, to stop in its career and drop a tear upon blasted hopes or ruined fortunes. "Let the dead bury the dead," is the safer charity. No one knows the person who lives in the next house. Marriage is getting to be a more and more difficult problem—difficult, if not impossible, to solve. Young women do absolutely nothing, and naturally enough desire to begin life where their mothers leave it. It is impossible; for few young men have fortunes to begin with, few ever have them at all.

The other extreme may be found in Cherry Street in any stormy night of winter—four or five families, men, and women, and little children, in a cellar reeking with damps; a dwelling-place without fire, without beds, except straw and rags; human creatures without food, without friends, without hope. Fifteen thousand of this class. Between these two classes come the great majority of the population, who live decently, work hard, and enjoy a fair measure of worldly comfort. But there are no idle people in New York, and no amusements for idle people. Idle people, therefore, soon weary of it and fly to Paris.

And this is what the 1,100 occupations and professions of the city produce—a few very rich, some very poor, neither class very happy; and the great mass, neither poor nor rich, nor happy nor wretched. It is a singular thing that there is hardly an instance, perhaps not one, where a rich man has made use of his inherited wealth to achieve distinction in any of the departments of science, literature, or art. Few, if any, engage in politics, and few carry on from generation to generation the business which their fathers have builded up. The community has no hold upon men of wealth and ability. No man of this class (if not instigated by selfish motives) now devotes himself to the public service or looks after the public good. The city government has, of course, fallen into the hands of men who know how to use it for their own purposes, and who are unscrupulous enough to make the most of their knowledge. To be sure, spasmodic efforts are made to rescue the city from their hands; but under the system of universal suffrage, which gives all power to the ignorant, the foolish, and the base,

such efforts are useless. Even judges are elected by this class, and most of them for but four years. The consequence is, a steady deterioration of the bench, and an alarming contempt for justice and law.

But the city is an attractive place, for it is all bustle, movement, life ; the streets are crowded with carriages and carts, the side-walks with a well-dressed multitude who wear no appearance of misery, but on the contrary have every aspect of success and satisfaction. They are agreeable to look at, much more attractive than the shabby and the ill-to-do. New York does divert the eye and occupy the mind. In fine, it may be said to combine the attractions and the evils of Liverpool and Paris. It is a place to make money, and it is a place to spend it ; but it is much more easy to spend it than to make it.

This is what Martin Crigier's holding has grown into, in some time less than two centuries and a quarter. A "big thing;" but a slow, laborious process has its growth been, compared with the rise of the second great American city we propose to notice.

S A N F R A N C I S C O.

HISTORICALLY, San Francisco is a baby amongst great cities. New York is of no great antiquity, but compared with her young sister she is as Damascus by the side of London—Rome by the side of Manchester. Her oldest inhabitant is, so to speak, not yet of age. Twenty summers since, San Francisco city had no existence. Now, 100,000 live people call themselves Franciscans ; and already her foreign commerce is next in importance to that of New York and Boston. Her exports of gold and silver amount to nearly 100,000,000 dollars a year ; and now (1867) she has stretched her hand across and grasps at the commerce of the whole continent of Asia.

For an extent of 2,000 miles the blue waters of the broad Pacific wash the shores of the continent, and in that whole distance there is but one safe harbour for ships to shelter in. There, in latitude 37° 48' north, the ocean breaks through the white hills of sand, and within the "Golden Gate" spreads out the spacious and beautiful bay of San Francisco.

How much of the history of this world is accident, or what seems such ! For thousands of years this fine harbour has waited, with open gates, for the commerce of man. It did not come ; but in January of the year 1848 the race-diggers at Captain Sutter's mill threw out with the earth golden grains. Then thousands poured into California, and spread themselves over the barren sand-hills of San Francisco ; then ships of all nations came flocking in ; then houses rose out of the sand as if by magic, and churches and palaces, until now we see there a great city, the third in its foreign commerce in America. Whence the name, and why a Spanish and a Catholic name for an American and a Protestant city ? In the year 1776, two of those earnest, wonderful, self-sacrificing souls

whom the Roman Catholic Church has sent out over the world, came to this barren coast and established a "Mission," built monasteries and schools, and planted vineyards, and raised sheep and cattle, and did what they might to civilize and christianize the Indians who then occupied the country. These two men were Spaniards and Franciscan monks, and they called their Mission San Francisco de Assisi. Three miles south of the present city the old "Mission," built of bricks, still stands. The good monks have long since departed, but the city is still called San Francisco. On the spot formerly occupied by a solitary house, built by an adventurous settler in 1835, now stands a spacious and elegant City Hall, in front of which spreads out Portsmouth Square, the *plaza* of the city. Not far from this are the Mint, the Hospital, and the Custom-house, which cost 800,000 dollars. In fine, a city covering nine square miles now lies within and upon the white sand-hills called Telegraph, Rincon, and Russian ; a city with decent streets, excellent churches, ample school-houses, plenty of water, and one of the finest of harbours. Behind her are the richest gold and silver mines of the world, and a breadth of two and a half million acres* of improved farming-lands, which in 1860 produced 6,000,000 bushels of wheat, potatoes which weighed six pounds, beets that measured eight inches in diameter, and cattle and horses innumerable. In so short a space of time were the desolate sand-hills transformed into a great city. Gold was discovered in the spring of 1848, and by the year 1849, 80,000 people had left the old States, had crossed arid deserts, scaled two ranges of snowy mountains, and had left more than 4,000 of their number dead on the way : such fearful sacrifices they made to reach the land of gold.

In the early days San Francisco was a strange place. A large portion of the population lived in tents, and slept on the ground ; men of elegant cultivation wore red shirts and did their own cooking ; every man was his own porter, and no man was ashamed to do the most menial work. Washing cost eight dolls. per dozen ; a bowling-alley was rented for 5,000 dolls. per month in gold, the Parker House for 110,000 dolls. a year, 60,000 dolls. of which was paid by the gambling-rooms ; the wages of servants was 100 dolls. to 200 dolls. per month ; and a good dray-horse could earn 100 dolls. per day. At first, gambling, drinking, and reckless adventure were the rule, not the exception. But no Anglo-Saxon race continues a gambling, drinking, and reckless people. Gambling is now illegal ; and to-day every woman in the city shapes herself after Parisian fashion-plates, and every man arrays himself in "store clothes" and "biled shirts,"† and goes about his business after the manner of a sober citizen. The best people decided, and the whole body quickly determined, that San Francisco should be no scorn and byword to men. A few details will best express what they have attempted, what they have

* Census of 1860.

† Native terms for broadcloth and white linen.

done. First, as regards education. It may amaze us of older and more cautious towns to note the energy with which, in a purely mercantile community, the subject of schools has been taken hold of. The Franciscans have built some thirty-one school-houses of different grades, rising to Latin Schools and High Schools. The Lincoln School building is, perhaps, the most eligible building for its purpose in America. It is built of brick—the architecture that of Renaissance, surmounted with a Mansard roof. It is thoroughly ventilated, and provided with water; has wide staircases, a large play-room, is 141 feet in length, and can accommodate with ease 900 scholars. Some 8,000 pupils attend these schools, and are taught by a corps of 178 of the most accomplished teachers that can be had, whose pay varies from 600 to 2,500 dolls. a year. The whole expenditure for the year 1865 was 849,818 dolls.

Besides public institutions, there are eighty private schools in San Francisco, of every degree of excellence, of which the Roman Catholics have twelve of the largest and most adequately endowed. The Union College and University School, and the California Institute for young ladies, cannot, in the estimation of Franciscans at least, be surpassed anywhere. Then, the California College is in a fair way to be adequately endowed and sustained; and to secure this, the Franciscans have set to work in their vigorous way to raise a fund of at least 100,000 dolls. It is evident, from these statistics, that the citizens do not mean to send their children away to Eastern or European towns to obtain an education, which they believe they can as well secure at home.

While the city has run a race for wealth and material good, it has not neglected to provide liberally for the destitute and the afflicted. Orphan-houses, relief-societies, prisoners'-aid societies, industrial schools, &c., are well advanced in number and efficiency; and public and private charity is desirous to do its utmost in all ways that mark a Christian civilization; and Jews and Chinese join in the good work. But there are no paupers there, and one rarely meets a beggar. Money and work, as yet, dominate population.

Libraries are well represented. The Mercantile Library has a collection of over 20,000 volumes, and the Odd Fellows', Mechanics', Christian Association, California Pioneers, and the Verein, each have a large and valuable collection. Some of the principal hotels also furnish ample reading for their guests; and the "What Cheer?" Hotel not only has a library of 5,000 volumes, but it also has a Natural History cabinet, a good number of paintings, and several pieces of good statuary.

The first-class hotels generally, such as the "Occidental," the "Cosmopolitan," "Lick House," and the "Russ," approach in character the best hotels of other cities. But this "What Cheer?" Hotel is a Yankee shoot grafted upon a California stock, and proves a most profitable growth. All is done for cash; your bed is paid for before you get into it. A large restaurant supplies 4,000 meals a day, at prices ranging from 15 cents upwards, and consumes daily as follows:—

eggs, 100 dozen ; sugar, 1 barrel ; butter, 100 pounds ; flour, 8 barrels ; potatoes, 500 pounds ; beef, pork, mutton, lamb, and fish, 700 pounds ; raisins, 2 boxes ; pies, 150 ; turkeys and chickens, 400 pounds ; milk, 400 quarts. Ample means are provided for you to black your own boots free, and the library of 5,000 volumes is open to all. There is no bar. The house has one more remarkable peculiarity—no women are allowed within it ; the servants are all men. It pays at the rate of 80,000 to 40,000 dolls. per year.

San Francisco has no lack of places of recreation or amusement. Besides theatres, which flourish, are to be found "Concordia societies," "Avonites," "Base-ball clubs," "Sanger-bunds," "Cricket-clubs," "Rifle-clubs," "Turn Vereins," "Philharmonics ;" and its people enjoy all their pleasures with a gusto and *abandon* which more conservative peoples know little of. The Press is represented by some forty-seven daily and weekly papers, which as a whole aim high. French, Italians, Germans, and Spaniards read the news in their own language.*

Along with the school and the press, the claims of religion have not been neglected in San Francisco. As early as the 8th of May, 1849, a public meeting was called for the purpose of ascertaining "the prevailing sentiment in relation to the establishment of a church in the town of San Francisco." The "prevailing sentiment" has, in eighteen years, built up forty-three churches. Of these the most elegant and most expensive are—the St. Mary's Cathedral, the Calvary, Presbyterian, and the Jewish Emanuel. The leading sects are the Catholics and the Methodists. Many of the churches are well supported. One of them yields a rental of 27,000 dollars.*

Assuming the same number of members as in the leading denominations of New York (820 to each church), San Francisco would seem to be one of the most religious cities in the world. But the Methodist societies represent an average of but 121 to each church, and the average of all probably does not exceed 200. This estimate shows that about one-quarter of the population may be recognized as belonging to the religious world.

The Young Men's Christian Association numbers near 400 members, and the Sunday schools give spiritual instruction to about 11,000 children.

Sunday is observed decorously, and is marked by a cessation of business, except among the Jewish merchants, who on that day ply a thriving trade. The Chinese, too, are willing to work on that day and every day. They might be called the "devotees of labour ;" and spare no pains to achieve that measure of success which will permit them to return to lay their bones with their ancestors in their beloved China.

The Franciscans are not only careful to live well and in good compass, but they have provided handsomely for deceased citizens. Cemeteries have been laid out and planted with care and order, and "Calvary" and

"Lone Mountain" attract the stranger, as they do the inhabitants on the fine Sunday afternoons, as a pleasant resort. Some of the monuments erected are costly and in good taste.

The climate of San Francisco is peculiar, but not disagreeable. During the summer and autumn the prevailing winds are north-westerly, coming in from the ocean, and it is usual for a warm morning to be succeeded by a cold afternoon, as then the wind begins to blow; in the afternoon, therefore, woollen is the universal wear. Sometimes, however, these winds raise the sand from the surrounding hills, and send it sweeping through the streets. At evening the wind subsides, and then the temperature is charming. The autumn and winter months have a prevailing south-west wind, which brings rain. The thermometer during the summer rarely rises above 90°, or sinks in the winter below 50°.

During all its first years San Francisco was built and sustained and fed by the capital of the East, and its food was sent out from Boston and New York. But now California produces yearly some 12,000,000 bushels of wheat, some 19,000,000 bushels of barley, and in 1864 she shipped some 7,000,000 pounds of wool.* Between the years 1856 and 1865 she sent away 1,000,000,000 of gold and silver. To-day she is shipping flour—10,000 barrels by each steamer—to New York, and wines in quantities; provisions, too, to the Sandwich Islands; and the first return steamer from China brought an order for 10,000 dollars-worth of Californian leather for the kingdom of Japan. Fruits and garden vegetables are most luxuriant; and the San Franciscans now eat the best of grapes, cherries, and pears, almost all the year round. The "Bartlett" pea continues in market for a period of five months, and a Dr. Adams of the San José has perfected his secret, so that he preserves the Easter beurré and other pears through the winter up to May in all their perfection, and supplies the market.

The merchants, of course, are the leading men of the city. They are bold, often reckless, in their transactions; but they are not as a class in bad repute. These merchants, by shrewdness and daring, have produced surprising results. Beside the great business-houses, are some remarkable business organizations. The California Steam Navigation Company plies its boats in all waters of the State that can be cut by keel, and thus it centres all the productions, and all the trade, at this city. The Wells Fargo Express Company has its agents at every village, every mine, and every ranch; it carries all letters and all money, all gold-dust, and all packages, faithfully and swiftly, and makes enormous profits for its stock-holders. In the year 1864, it purchased some two and a quarter millions United States' stamped envelopes, which is significant of the extent of its business. It acts as a private post-office, a banker and a carrier, throughout the mining districts of California, Idaho, Nevada and Washoe; and by this time no doubt it has an office under one of the "big trees" of the

* Dr. HOLDEN'S Address.

Yosemite Valley. The Pacific Mail Company owns one of the grandest of steam navies, and controls the passenger and freight carriage of two oceans.

The exports to China, in the year 1866, reached the sum of 7,999,140 dolls., and the total exports the sum of 78,458,478 dolls.

Manufactures are starting, and the same energy marks their inception, and no doubt the same success will attend their development as has characterized all other undertakings in San Francisco. Already an extensive woollen mill is established in the city, the proprietor of which enjoys the double advantage of Scotch blood and a Massachusetts training. Here over a million pounds of California grown wool are annually converted into blankets, &c., of a superior manufacture. Machine-shops and other branches of industry are already extensive, and are growing, and cotton-mills are started; and before long San Francisco promises to present the same great variety of occupations as marks older cities.

It may be said that San Francisco has not made itself, and has cost much. The first emigration, of 1849, cost more than four thousand lives of active, stalwart men; subsequent exposures and excesses destroyed ten times that number at least; so that the bones of men have been the foundations of the city. Pen cannot write nor imagination conceive the sacrifices of comfort, the hardship and sickness and suffering, that these hoping thousands endured before Eldorado became a fit habitation for man. Year after year saw thousands, accustomed to the comforts and luxuries of older societies, digging deep into the bowels of the earth, damming rivers, changing watercourses, blasting mountains, in search of gold; their food coarse and scant, their bed a blanket and the soft earth. No bright hearth welcomed them when weary, no woman's smile greeted their coming, no kind hand softened the sufferings of fever. Many found their only solace in drink and gambling, and many a one laid down his life and left no sign. But this was not the worst. At the news of gold, the loose floating elements of society flowed hither, not only from the United States, but from Mexico, Europe, Asia. The city early became filled with rude, desperate men, and crimes of every kind were perpetrated.

Two crises in the history of the city were brought about by the prevailing spirit of lawlessness,—the first in 1851, the second in 1856. Thieves, robbers, incendiaries, gamblers, murderers, walked the streets openly and defied the law. No life, no property was safe; no regard was paid to honour, to morality, to decency. If the criminals were apprehended, their trials dragged; a criminal could not be convicted, or if convicted, he somehow escaped to again prey upon his kind. Ordinary laws were powerless under such circumstances.

At length a few of the more resolute citizens determined to act for themselves, and combined themselves into a "Vigilance Committee." They professed to be assisting the law, but they took the law into their own hands, took the prisoners from lawful custody, tried them, and if guilty of serious crimes hanged them on the spot. This committee in-

creased in numbers,* was thoroughly organized, had its own bylaws, and a certain number of them were always on duty. They examined the resorts of thieves and scoundrels; apprehended some, hanged some, banished others. For a time there was a reign of terror, but it was terror only to the desperadoes and scoundrels. Whether or not the end justified the means—it is certain they scared ruffianism from San Francisco for a time. In such a city as San Francisco, uncommon villany induces uncommon means to suppress it. Only a few years ago our newspapers contained a terrible account of the death of a notorious bully and gambler. Law, honour, decency, life, he held in contempt. The people rose against him; he fled to his own house for safety and barricaded his doors, and no one dared to break in. They surrounded the house and watched and waited; they filled the opposite houses and windows with armed men. Through his own windows they could see his motions but dimly. At last, after a day and a night, the desperate man approached the window, perhaps to see if his enemies had left him, perhaps to see the sunlight, perhaps tired of his wretched life: then he was shot dead.

The infant city had to contend against another enemy. Five most destructive fires devastated it between 1849 and 1851, destroying houses and property to an enormous extent. This loss had to be overcome, and, of course, considerably retarded the progress of the city.

One of the peculiarities of the earlier population was great disproportion of the sexes. In 1852, the number of white males was 29,165 to 5,154 females. Add to these the transient population, and the number of men is increased to nearly 85,000. In 1860 the disproportion was diminished to 88,990 males to 21,686 females; now it is still less.

The circumstances of its early history have in a degree given character to the people. It is no longer gross, reckless, immoral; but it is a worldly people, bent upon gold and the things which gold buys; and it grasps at those with a peculiar energy and daring. What it gets it spends, and not niggardly; it spends it not only upon houses and horses, and clothes and pictures, but upon school-houses, and churches, and hospitals, and upon every recognized good thing. During the war, it sent its silver and gold by ship-loads to succour the wounded suffering soldiers—it could not do enough to satisfy itself. One evening while Dr. Bellows was there (and he was well known as the President of the Sanitary Commission) some one cried out, "Whosoever wishes to shake hands with Dr. Bellows must pay a dollar to the Sanitary Fund." The suggestion took; and so long as the strength of the doctor's arm held out, so long these free, open-handed people shook it, and shook their dollars into the treasury.

This lavish disposition shows itself among all classes. It shows itself in the dress and jewellery worn by the ladies, which are richer and more

* In 1856, 9,000 out of 12,000 citizens enrolled themselves in the committee.

costly than elsewhere. The carriage and manners of both men and women are affected by this; all tends towards a free, "fast" way, which in older places would not be tolerated. San Francisco is not a signally virtuous city, yet there may be found some of the most high-minded of men, the most charming of women. But the bachelor element prevails largely, more than in most cities, and restaurant and hotel life tempts married men, and "the "home" does not yet rule society. Mr. Bowles, in his admirable book, says, "There is a want of femininity, of spirituality, in the current tone of the place; more lack of reverence for women than our eastern towns are accustomed to. You hear more than is pleasant of private scandals; of the vanity and weakness of women; of the infidelity of wives." "It is the cussedest place for women," said an observant Yankee citizen, some two or three years from home, and not forgetful yet of mother, sister, and cousin; "a town of men and taverns, and boarding-houses and billiard-saloons."

A word must be said about the Chinese, who already muster in California some 80,000. There are probably 15,000 to 20,000 in San Francisco. They are smaller than the whites, but are the most patient, laborious class of all, and do a vast amount of work at a small cost. Among them are some large merchants and some very intelligent men; but, as a class, they are "far down." Among their leading businesses, next to supplying food, are the importation of prostitutes and the exportation of dead Chinese; for every one desires to be buried in his own land.

There are no Chinese beggars, for nearly all who come over belong to one of the five great "Companies." Each of these has a building, and acts in all respects as a benevolent institution.

* BOWLES: *Across the Continent.*



A PLEASANT DINNER

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

MAY, 1869.

The Brambleys of Blackgate Hall.

CHAPTER XLII.

A SPECIAL MISSION.



HEN a very polite note from Lord Culdnuff to Mr. Sybill expressed the deep regret he felt at not being able to receive that gentleman at dinner, as an affair of much moment required his presence at Naples, the noble lord was more correct than it was his usual fate to be in matters of apology. The fact was, that his lordship had left England several weeks before, charged with a most knotty and difficult mission to the European court; and though the question involved the misery of imprisonment or escape of the persons whom he represented, and called forth more than the ordinary interest for information in the papers, the great continental monarchs were greatly over-

the Continent, desirous to absent themselves from their capitals with anything like propriety, and therefore could not afford to be disturbed by the arrival of any one, or in any way influenced by the personal appearance of any one, who had been sent by the Queen, which F. O. persistently said after him.

One of his theories was, that in doing so, he had done in a sort of disguised languor that which

or of emergency. "Haste implies pressure," he would say, "and pressure means weakness: therefore, always be slow, occasionally even to apathy."

There was no denying it, he was a great master in that school of his art which professed to baffle all efforts at inquiry. No man ever wormed a secret from him that he desired to retain, or succeeded in entrapping him in any accidental admission. He could talk for hours with a frankness that was positively charming. He could display a candour that seemed only short of indiscretion; and yet, when you left him, you found you had carried away nothing beyond some neatly turned aphorisms, and a few very harmless imitations of Macchiavellian subtlety. Like certain men who are fond of showing how they can snuff a candle with a bullet, he was continually exhibiting his skill at fence, with the added assurance that nothing would grieve him so ineffably as any display of his ability at your expense.

He knew well that these subtleties were no longer the mode; that men no longer tried to outwit each other in official intercourse; that the time for such feats of smartness had as much gone by as the age of high neck-cloths and tight coats; but yet, as he adhered to the old dandyism of the Regency in his dress, he maintained the old traditions of finesse in his diplomacy, and could no more have been betrayed into a Truth than he could have worn a Jim Crow. For that mere plodding, commonplace race of men that now filled "the line" he had the most supreme contempt; men who had never uttered a smart thing, or written a clever one. Diplomacy without epigram was like a dinner without truffles. It was really pleasant to hear him speak of the great days of Metternich and Nesselrode and Talleyrand, when a frontier was settled by a bon mot, and a dynasty decided by a doggerel. The hoarse roar of the multitude had not in those times disturbed the polished solemnity of the council-chamber, and the high-priests of statecraft celebrated their mysteries unmolested.

"The ninth telegram, my lord," said Temple, as he stood with a cipher despatch in his hand, just as General Goldruff had reached his hotel at Naples.

"Transcribe it, my dear boy, and let me see."

"I have, my lord. It runs, 'Where is the royal party? Let him report himself by telegraph.'

"Rugby. As dinner, at the Hotel. Excellent health, and indifferent spirits."

"But, my lord——"

"There, you'd better drop it. You are always late. And tell the people here to smoke cigars every day till I countermand them; and taste the Chablis, please; I send it to Castelnuovo, if it be good. The telegram can wait."

"I was going to mention, my lord, that Prince Castelnuovo has called twice to-day, and begged to be informed of your arrival. Shall I write him a line?"

"No. The request must be replied to by him to whom it was addressed,—the landlord perhaps, or the *laquais-de-place*."

"The King is most anxious to learn if you have come."

"His Majesty shall be rewarded for his courteous impatience. I shall ask an audience to-morrow."

"They told me dinner was served," said Lady Culduff, angrily, as she entered the room, dressed as if for a court entertainment; "and I hurried down without putting on my gloves."

"Let me kiss your ladyship's hand so temptingly displayed," said he, stooping and pressing it to his lips.

An impatient gesture of the shoulder, and a saucy curl of the lip, were the only response to this gallantry.

A full half-hour before Lord Culduff appeared Temple Bramleigh re-entered, dressed for dinner.

"Giacomo is at his old tricks, Temple," said she, as she walked the room impatiently. "His theory is that every one is to be in waiting on my lord; and I have been here now close on three-quarters of an hour, expecting dinner to be announced. Will you please to take some trouble about the household, or let us have an attache who will?"

"Giacomo is impossible—that's the fact; but it's no use saying so."

"I know that," said she, with a malicious twinkle of the eye. "The man who is so dexterous with rouge and pomatum cannot be spared. But can you tell me, Temple, why we came here? There was no earthly reason to quit a place that suited us perfectly because Lady Augusta Bramleigh wished to do us an impertinence."

"Oh, but we ought to have been here six weeks ago! They are frantic at 'the Office' at our delay, and there will be a precious to-do about it in the House."

"Culduff likes that. If he has moments that resemble happiness, they are those when he is so palpably in the wrong that they would ruin any other man than himself."

"Well, he has got one of them now, I can tell you."

"Oh, I am aware of what you diplomatic people call great emergencies, critical conjunctures, and the like; but as Lord Watermore said the other evening, 'all your falls are like those in the circus—you always come down upon saw-dust.'

"There's precious little 'saw-dust' here! It's a case will make a tremendous noise in England. When a British subject has been ironed and—"

"Am I late? I shall be in despair, my lady, if I have kept you waiting," said Lord Culduff, entering in all the glory of red ribbon and Guelph, and with an unusually brilliant glow of youth and health in his features.

It was with a finished gallantry that he offered his arm, and his smile, as he led her to the dinner-room, was triumph itself. "What's contrast to the moody discontent on her face; for she did not even affect to listen to

his excuses, or bestow the slightest attention on his little flatteries and compliments. During the dinner Lord Culduff alone spoke. He was agreeable after his manner, which was certainly a very finished manner; and he gave little reminiscences of the last time he had been at Naples, and the people he had met, sketching their eccentricities and oddities most amusingly, for he was a master in those light touches of satire which deal with the ways of society, and, perhaps, to any one but his wife he would have been most entertaining and pleasant. She never deigned the very faintest recognition of what he said. She neither smiled when he was witty, nor looked shocked at his levities. Only once, when, by a direct appeal to her, silence was impossible, she said, with a marked spitefulness, "You are talking of something very long ago. I think I heard of that when I was a child." There was a glow under his lordship's rouge as he raised his glass to his lips, and an almost tremor in his voice when he spoke again.

"I'm afraid you don't like Naples, my lady?"

"I detest it."

"The word is strong; let it be my care to try and induce you to recall it."

"It will be lost time, my lord. I always hated the place, and the people too."

"You were pleased with Rome, I think?"

"And that possibly was the reason we left it. I mean," said she, blushing with shame at the rudeness that had escaped her, "I mean that one is always torn away from the place they are content to live in. It is the inevitable destiny."

"Very pleasant claret that for hotel wine," said Lord Culduff, passing the bottle to Temple. "The small race of travellers who frequent the Continent now rarely call for the better wines, and the consequence is that Margaux and Marcobrunner get that time to mature in the cellars, which was denied to them in former times."

A complete silence now ensued. At last Lord Culduff said, "Shall we have coffee?" and offering his arm with the same courteous gallantry as before, he led Lady Culduff into the drawing-room, bowing, as he relinquished her hand, as though he stood in presence of a queen. "I know you are very tolerant," said he, with a bewitching smile, "and as we shall have no visitors this evening, may I ask the favour of being permitted a cigarette—only one?"

"As many as you like. I am going to my room, my lord." And ere he could hasten to open the door, she swept haughtily out of the room and disappeared.

"We must try and make Naples pleasant for my lady," said Lord Culduff, as he drew his chair to the fire; but there was, somehow, a malicious twinkle in his eye and a peculiar curl of the lip as he spoke that scarcely vouches for the loyalty of his words; and that Temple heard him with distrust seemed evident by his silence. "You'd better go over

: to the Legation and say we have arrived. If Blagden asks when he may call, tell him at two to-morrow. Let them send over all the correspondence; and I think we shall want some one out of the chancellerie. Whom have they got? Throw your eye over the list."

Opening a small volume bound in red morocco, Temple read out, "Minister and envoy, Sir Geoffrey Blagden, K.C.B.; first secretary, Mr. Tottenham; second secretaries, Ralph Howard, the Hon. Edward Eccles, and W. Thornton; third secretary, George Hilliard; attaché, Christopher Stepney."

"I only know one of these men; indeed, I can scarcely say I know him. I knew his father, or his grandfather perhaps. At all events, take some one who writes a full hand, with the letters very upright, and who seldom speaks, and never has a cold in his head."

"You don't care for any one in particular?" asked Temple, meekly.

"Of course not; no more than for the colour of the horse in a Hansom. If Blagden hints anything about dining with him, say I don't dine out; though I serve her Majesty, I do not mean to destroy my constitution; and I know what a legation dinner means, with a Scotchman for the chief of the mission. I'm so thankful he is not married, or we should have his wife calling on my lady. You can dine there if you like; indeed, perhaps, you ought. If Blagden has an opera-box, say my lady likes the theatre. I think that's all. Stay, don't let him pump you about my going to Vienna; and drop in on me when you come back."

Lord Culduff was fast asleep in a deep arm-chair before his dressing-room fire when Temple returned. The young man looked wearied and worn out, as well he might; for the Minister had insisted on going over the whole "question" to him, far less, indeed, for his information or instruction, than to justify every step the Legation had taken, and to show the utter unfairness and ungenerosity of the Foreign Office in sending out a special mission to treat a matter which the accredited envoy was already bringing to a satisfactory conclusion.

"No, no, my dear boy, no blue-books, no correspondence. I shook my religious principles in early life by reading Gibbon, and I never was quite sure of my grammar since I studied diplomatic despatches. Just tell me the matter as you'd tell a scandal or a railway accident."

"Where shall I begin then?"

"Begin where we come in."

"Ah, but I can't tell where that is. You know, of course, that there was a filibustering expedition which landed on the coast, and encountered the revenue guard, and overpowered them, and were in turn attacked, routed, and captured by the Royal troops."

"Ta, ta, ta! I don't want all that. Come down to the events of June—June 27 they call it."

"Well, it was on that day when the *Erebus* was about to get under way, with two hundred of these fellows sentenced to the galleys for life, that a tremendous storm broke over the Bay of Naples. Since the

memorable hurricane of '92 there had been nothing like it. The sea-wall of the Chiaja was washed away, and a frigate was cast on shore at Caserta with her bowsprit in the palace windows ; all the lower town was under water, and many lives lost. But the damage at sea was greatest of all : eight fine ships were lost, the crews having, with some few exceptions, perished with them."

"Can't we imagine a great disaster—a very great disaster ? I'll paint my own storm, so pray go on."

"Amongst the merchant shipping was a large American barque which rode out the gale, at anchor, for several hours ; but, as the storm increased, her captain, who was on shore, made signal to the mate to slip his cable and run for safety to Castellamare. The mate, a young Englishman, named Rogers——"

"Samuel Rogers?"

"The same, my lord, though it is said not to be his real name. He, either misunderstanding the signal—or, as some say, wilfully mistaking its meaning—took to his boat, with the eight men he had with him, and rowed over to a small despatch-boat of the Royal Navy, which was to have acted as convoy to the *Ercole*, but whose officers were unable to get on board of her, so that she was actually under the command of a petty officer. Rogers boarded her, and proposed to the man in command to get up steam, and try to save the lives of the people who were perishing on every hand. He refused : an altercation ensued, and the English—for they were all English—overpowered them and sent them below——"

"Don't say under hatches, my dear boy, or I shall expect to see you hitching your trousers next."

Temple reddened, but went on : "They got up steam in all haste, and raised their anchor, but only at the instant that the *Ercole* foundered, quite close to them, and the whole sea was covered with the soldiers and the galley-slaves, who had jumped overboard, and the ship went down. Rogers made for them at once and rescued above a hundred—mostly of the prisoners—but he saved also many of the crew, and the soldiers. From four o'clock till high seven, he continued to cruise back and forward through the bay, assisting every one who needed help, and saving life on every side. As the gale abated, yielding to the pitiless entreaties of the prisoners, whom he well knew were political offenders, he landed them all near Baia, and was quietly returning to the mooring-ground whence he had taken the despatch-boat, when he was boarded by two armed boats' crews of the Royal Navy, ironed and carried off to prison."

"That will do, I know the rest. Blagden asked to have them tried in open court, and was told that the trial was over, and that they had been condemned to death, but the sentence, commuted by royal mercy, to hard labour at the galleys. I knew your long story before you told it, but listened to hear what new element you might have interpolated since you saw the people at the Legation. I find you, on the whole, very correct. How the Neapolitan Government and H. M.'s Ministers have mistaken,

mystified, and slanged each other ; how they have misinterpreted law and confounded national right ; how they have danced a reel through all justice, and changed places with each other some half-dozen times, so that an arbiter—if there were one—would put them both out of court—I have read all in the private correspondence. Even the people in Parliament, patent bunglers as they are in foreign customs, began to ask themselves, Is Filangieri in the pay of her Majesty ? and how comes it that Blagden is in the service of Naples ? "

" Oh, it's not so bad as that ! "

" Yes, it's fully as bad as that. Such a muddled correspondence was probably never committed to print. They thought it a controversy, but the combatants never confronted each other. One appealed to humanity, the other referred to the law ; one went off in heroics about gallantry, and the other answered by the galley. People ought to be taught that diplomatists do not argue, or if they do, they are mere tyros at their trade. Diplomatists insinuate, suppose, suggest, hope, fear, and occasionally threaten ; and with these they take in a tolerably wide sweep of human motives. There, go to bed now, my dear boy ; you have had enough of precepts for one evening ; tell Giacomo not to disturb me before noon,—I shall probably write late into the night."

Temple bowed and took his leave, but scarcely had he reached the stairs than Lord Culduff laid himself in his bed and went off into a sound sleep. Whether his rest was disturbed by dreams ; whether his mind went over the crushing things he had in store for the Neapolitan Minister, or the artful excuses he intended to write home ; whether he composed sonorous sentences for a blue-book, or invented witty epigrams for a "private and confidential ;" or whether he only dreamed of a new preparation of glycerine and otto of roses, which he had seen advertised as an "invaluable accessory to the toilet," this history does not, perhaps need not, record.

As, however, we are not about to follow the course of his diplomatic efforts in our next chapter, it is pleasant to take leave of him in his repose.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE CHURCH PATRONS.

As the season drew to its close at Albano, and the period of returning to Rome approached, the church committee, following the precedent of all previous years, fell out, and held a succession of vestry-meetings for mutual abuse and reminiscence. Partnership is the badge of church patronage, and while the parson had his adherents and the organist his supporters, there were half-a-dozen very wizened friends who admitted the come of the bell-ringer—a drunken little feather, who, because he had never crossed the threshold of a Catholic church for years, was given broad back as a member of the Reformed religion.

The time of auditing the church accounts is usually a sort of day of judgment on the clergyman. All the complaints that can be preferred against him are kept for that occasion. A laudable sentiment possibly prompts men to ascertain what they have got for their money ; at all events, people in nowise remarkable for personal thrift show at such times a most searching spirit of inquiry, and eagerly investigate the cost of sweeping out the vestry and clear-starching the chaplain's bands.

As to the doctrine of the parson, and the value of his ministration, there were a variety of opinions. He was too high for this one, too dry for that ; he was not impressive, not solemn nor dignified with some, while others deemed him deficient in that winning familiarity which is so soothing to certain sinners. Some thought his sermons too high-flown and too learned, others asked why he only preached to the children in the gallery. On one only point was there anything like unanimity : each man who withdrew his subscription did so on principle. None, not one, referred his determination to contribute no longer to any motive of economy. All declared that it was something in the celebration of the service—a doctrine inculcated in the pulpit—something the parson had said or something he had worn—obliged them, “with infinite regret,” to withdraw what they invariably called their mite. In fact, one thing was clear : a more high-minded, right-judging, scrupulous body of people could not be found than the congregation, whatever might be said or thought of him whose duty it was to guide them. :

Lady Augusta Bramleigh had gone off to Rome, and a small three-cornered note, highly perfumed, and most nervously written, informed the committee that she was quite ready to continue her former subscription, or more, if required ; that she was charmed with the chaplain, pleased with the choir, and generally delighted with every one—a testimony more delicately valuable from the fact that she had been but once to church during the entire season.

Sir Marcus Cluff, after reading out the letter, took occasion to observe on the ventilation of the church, which was defective in many respects. There was a man in King Street—he thought his name was Harmond or something like Harmond, but it might be Fox—who had invented a self-revolving pane for church windows ; it was perfectly noiseless, and the expense a mere trifle, though it required to be adjusted by one of the patentee's own people ; some mistakes having occurred by blundering adaptation, by which two persons had been asphyxiated at Redhill.

The orator was here interrupted by Mrs. Trampler, who stoutly affirmed that she had come there that day at great inconvenience, and was in no-wise prepared to listen to a discourse upon drughts, or the rival merits of certain plumbers. There were higher considerations than these that might occupy them, and she wished to know if M. L'Estrange was prepared to maintain the harsh, and she must say the ungenerous and unscholarlike view he had taken of the character of Judas. If so, she withdrew her subscription, but added that she would also in a pamphlet

explain to the world the reason of her retirement, as well as the other grounds of complaint she had against the chaplain.

One humble contributor of fifteen francs alleged that, though nut-crackers were a useful domestic implement, they formed an unpleasant accompaniment to the hymns, and occasionally startled devotionally minded persons during the service; and he added his profound regret at the seeming apathy of the clergyman to the indecent interruption; indeed, he had seen the parson sitting in the reading-desk, while these disturbances continued, to all appearance unmoved and indifferent.

A retired victualler, Mr. Mowser, protested that to see the walk of the clergyman, as he came up the aisle, "was enough for him;" and he had only come to the meeting to declare that he himself had gone over to the sect of the Nuremberg Christians, who, at least, were humble-minded and lowly, and who thought their pastor handsomely provided for with a thousand francs a year and a suit of black clothes at Christmas.

In a word, there was much discontent abroad, and a very general opinion seemed to prevail that, what with the increasing dearness of butchers' meat, and an extra penny lately added to the income-tax, it behoved every one to see what wise and safe economy could be introduced into their affairs. It is needless to say how naturally it suggested itself to each that the church subscription was a retrenchment at once practicable and endurable.

Any one who wishes to convince himself how dear to the Protestant heart is the right of private judgment, has only to attend a vestry meeting of a church supported on the voluntary system. It is the very grandest assertion of that great principle. There is not a man there represented by ten francs' annual subscription who has not very decided opinions of the doctrine he requires for his money; and thus, while no one agreed with his neighbour, all concurred in voting that they deemed the chaplain had not fulfilled their expectations, and that they reserved their right to contribute or not for the ensuing year, as future thought and consideration should determine.

L'Estrange had gone in to Rome to meet Augustus Bramleigh and Ellen, who were coming to pass the Christmas with him, when Sir Marcus Cluff called to announce this unpleasant resolution of the church patrons.

"Perhaps I could see Miss L'Estrange?" said he to the servant, who had said her master was from home.

Julia was seated working at the window as Sir Marcus entered the room.

"I hope I do not come at an unseemly hour; I scarcely know the time one ought to visit here," he began, as he fumbled to untie the strings of his respirator. "How nice and warm your room is; and a south aspect, too. Ah! that's what my house fails in."

"I'm so sorry my brother is not at home, Sir Marcus. He will regret not meeting you."

"And I'm sorry, too. - I could have broken the bad news to him, perhaps, better than—I mean—oh, dear! if I begin coughing, I shall

never cease. Would you mind my taking my drops? They are only aconite and lettuce; and if I might ask for a little fresh water. I'm so sorry to be troublesome."

Though all anxiety to know to what bad news he referred, she hastened to order the glass of water he desired, and calmly resumed her seat.

"It's spasmodic, this cough. I don't know if that be any advantage, or the reverse; but the doctor says 'only spasmodic,' which would lead one to suppose it might be worse. Would you do me the great favour to drop thirty-five, be sure only thirty-five, of these? I hope your hand does not shake."

"No, Sir Marcus. It is very steady."

"What a pretty hand it is. How taper your fingers are, but you have these dimples at the knuckles they say are such signs of cruelty."

"Oh, Sir Marcus!"

"Yes, they say so. Nana Saib had them, and that woman—there, there, you have given me thirty-seven."

"No, I assure you, Sir Marcus; only thirty-five. I'm a practised hand at dropping medicine. My brother used to have violent headaches."

"And you always measured his drops, did you?"

"Always. I'm quite a clever nurse, I assure you."

"Oh, dear! do you say so?" And as he laid down his glass he looked at her with an expression of interest and admiration, which pushed her gravity to its last limit.

"I don't believe a word about the cruelty they ascribe to those dimples. I pledge you my word of honour I do not," said he, seriously.

"I'm sincerely glad to hear you say so," said she, trying to seem grave.

"And is your brother much of an invalid?"

"Not now. The damp climate of Ireland gave him headaches, but he rarely has them here."

"Ah, and you have such a quiet way of moving about; that gentle gliding step, so soothing to the sick. Oh, you don't know what a boon it is; and the common people never have it, nor can they acquire it. When you went to ring the bell, I said to myself, 'That's it! that's what all the teaching in the world cannot impart.'"

"You will make me very vain, Sir Marcus. All the more that you give me credit for merits I never suspected."

"Have you a cold hand?" asked he, with a look of eagerness.

"I really don't know. Perhaps I have."

"If I might dare. Ah," said he, with much feeling, as he touched her hand in the most gentle manner—"Ah! that is the greatest gift of nature. A small hand, perfect in form, beautiful in colour, and cold as marble."

Julia could resist no longer, but laughed out one of those pleasant merry laughs whose music make an echo in the heart.

"I know well enough what you are saying to yourself. I think I hear you muttering, 'What an original, what a strange creature it is! And so I am, I won't deny it. One who has been an invalid for eighteen years;

eighteen years passed in the hard struggle with an indolent alimentary system, for they say it's no more. There's nothing organic; nothing whatever. Structurally, said Dr. Barres of Leamington, structurally you are as sound as a roach. I don't fully appreciate the comparison, but I take it the roach must be a very healthy fish. Oh, here's your brother coming across the garden. I wish he had not come just yet; I had a —no matter, perhaps you'd permit me to have a few words with you to-morrow?"

"To-morrow, or whenever you like, Sir Marcus; but pray forgive me if I run away now to ask my brother if our visitors have come."

"They'll be here to-morrow evening, Ju," said George, as she rushed to meet him. "Is that Cluff's phaeton I see at the gate?"

"Yes; the tiresome creature has been here the last hour. I'll not go back to him. You must take your share now."

By the time L'Estrange entered the room, Sir Marcus had replaced his respirator, and enveloped himself in two of his overcoats and a fur boa. "Oh, here you are," said he, speaking with much difficulty. "I can't talk now; it brings on the cough. Come over in the evening, and I'll tell you about it."

"About what, pray?" asked the other curtly.

"There's no use being angry. It only hurries the respiration, and chokes the pulmonary vessels. They won't give a sixpence—not one of them. They say that you don't preach St. Paul—that you think too much about works. I don't know what they don't say; but come over about seven."

"Do you mean that the subscribers have withdrawn from the church?"

Sir Marcus had not breath for further discussion, but made a gesture of assent with his head.

L'Estrange sank down on a chair overpowered, nor did he speak to, or notice, the other as he withdrew.

"Are you ill, dearest George?" said Julia, as she saw her brother pale and motionless on the chair. "Are you ill?"

"They've all withdrawn from the church, Julia. Cluff says they are dissatisfied with me, and will contribute no longer."

"I don't believe it's so bad as he says. I'm sure it's not. They cannot be displeased with you, George. It's some mere passing misconception. You know how they're given to these little bickerings and squabbles; but they have ever been kind and friendly to you."

"You always give me courage, Ju; and even when I have little heart for it, I like it."

"Come in to dinner now, George; and if I don't make you laugh, it's a wonder to me. I have had such a scene with Sir Marcus as might have graced a comedy."

It was not an easy task to rally her brother back to good spirits, but she did succeed at last. "And now," said she, as she saw him looking

once more at ease and cheerful, "what news of the Bramleighs—are they ever to come?"

"They'll be here to-morrow evening, Ju. Unless they were quite sure the Culduffs had left for Naples, they would not venture here; and perhaps they were so far in the right."

"I don't think so; at least, if I had been Nelly, I'd have given anything for such an opportunity of presenting myself to my distinguished relations and terrifying them by the thought of those attentions that they could neither give me nor deny me."

"No, no, Julia, nothing of the kind; there would be malice in that."

"Do I deny it? A great deal of malice in it; and there's no good comedy in life without a slight flavour of spitefulness. Oh, my poor dear George, what a deep sigh that was! How sad it is to think, that all your example and all your precept do so little, and that your sister acquires nothing by your companionship except the skill to torment you."

"But why will you say those things that you don't mean—that you couldn't feel?"

"I believe I do it, George, just the way a horse bounds and rears and buck-leaps. It does not help him on his road, but it lightens the journey; and then it offers such happy occasion for the exercise of that nice light hand of my brother to check these aberrations. You ought to be eternally grateful for the way I develope your talents as a moralist—I was going to say a horse-breaker."

"I suppose," said he, after a moment's silence, "I ought to go over to Sir Marcus and learn from him exactly how matters stand here."

"No, no; never mind him—at least, not this evening. Bores are bad enough in the morning, but after dinner, when one really wants to think well of their species, they are just intolerable; besides, I composed a little song while you were away, and I want you to hear it, and then you know we must have some serious conversation about Sir Marcus; he is to be here to-morrow."

"I declare, Ju—"

"There, don't declare, but open the pianoforte, and light the candles; and as I mean to sing for an hour at least, you may have that cigar that you looked so lovingly at, and put back into the case. Ain't I good for you, as the French say?"

"Very good, too good for me," said he, kissing her, and now every trace of his sorrow was gone, and he looked as happy as might be.

CHAPTER XLV.

A PLEASANT DINNER.

PRUDENT people will knit their brows and wise people shake their heads at the bare mention of it, but I cannot help saying that there is a wonderful fascination in those little gatherings which bring a few old

friends around the same board, who, forgetting all the little pinchings and straits of narrow fortune, give themselves up for once to enjoyment without a thought for the cost or a care for the morrow. I do not want this to pass for sound morality, nor for a discreet line of conduct; I only say that in the spirit that can subdue every sentiment that would jar on the happiness of the hour there is a strength and vitality that shows this feeling is not born of mere conviviality, but of something deeper, and truer, and heartier.

"If we only had poor Jack here," whispered Augustus Bramleigh to L'Estrange, as they drew around the Christmas fire, "I'd say this was the happiest hearth I know of."

"And have you no tidings of him?" said L'Estrange, in the same low tone; for, although the girls were in eager talk together, he was afraid Julia might overhear what was said.

"None, except that he sailed from China on board an American clipper for Smyrna, and I am now waiting for news from the Consul there, to whom I have written, enclosing a letter for him."

"And he is serving as a sailor?"

Bramleigh nodded.

"What is the mysterious conversation going on there?" said Julia. "How grave George looks, and Mr. Bramleigh seems overwhelmed with a secret of importance."

"I guess it," said Nelly, laughing. "Your brother is relating your interview with Sir Marcus Cluff, and they are speculating on what is to come of it."

"Oh, that reminds me," cried L'Estrange, suddenly, "Sir Marcus's servant brought me a letter just as I was dressing for dinner. Here it is. What a splendid seal—supporters, too! Have I permission to read?"

"Read, read by all means," cried Julia.

"DEAR SIR.—If I could have sufficiently conquered my bronchitis as to have ventured out this morning, I would have made you my personal apologies for not having received you last night when you did me the honour to call, as well as opened to you by word of mouth what I am now reduced to convey by pen."

"He is just as prolix as when he talks," said Julia.

"It's a large hand, however, and easy to read. 'My old enemy the larynx—more in fault than even the bronchial tubes—is again in arms—'"

"Oh, do spare us his anatomical disquisition, George. Skip him down to where he proposes for me."

"But it is what he does not. You are not mentioned in the whole of it. It is all about Church matters. It is an explanation of why every one has withdrawn his subscription and left the establishment, and why he alone is faithful and willing to contribute, even to the extent of five pounds additional—"

"This is too heartless by half; the man has treated me shamefully."

"I protest I think so too," said Nelly, with a mock seriousness ; "he relies upon your brother's gown for his protection."

"Shall I have him out ? But, by the way, why do you call me Mr. Bramleigh ? Wasn't I Augustus—or rather Gusty—when we met last ?"

"I don't think so ; so well as I remember, I treated you with great respect, dashed with a little bit of awe. You and your elder sister were always 'personages' to me."

"I cannot understand that. I can easily imagine Temple inspiring that deference you speak of."

"You were the true Prince, however, and I had all Falstaff's reverence for the true Prince."

"And yet you see after all I am like to turn out only a Pretender."

"By the way, the pretender is here ; I mean—if it be not a bull to say it—the real pretender, Count Pracontal."

"Count Pracontal de Bramleigh, George," said Julia, correcting him. "It is the drollest mode of assuming a family name I ever heard of."

"What is he like ?" asked Ellen.

"Like a very well-bred Frenchman of the worst school of French manners : he has none of that graceful ease and that placid courtesy of the past period, but he has abundance of the volatile readiness and showy smartness of the present day. They are a wonderful race, however, and their smattering is better than other men's learning."

"I want to see him," said Augustus.

"Well," broke in L'Estrange, "Lady Augusta writes to me to say that he wants to see you."

"What does Lady Augusta know of him ?"

"Heaven knows," cried Julia ; "but they are always together ; their rides over the Campagna furnish just now the chief scandal of Rome. George, you may see, looks very serious and rebukful about it ; but, if the truth were told, there's a little jealousy at the root of his morality."

"I declare, Julia, this is too bad."

"Too true, also, my dear George. Will you deny that you used to ride out with her nearly every evening in the summer, rides that began at sunset and ended—I was always asleep when you came home, and so I never knew when they ended."

"Was she very agreeable ?" asked Nelly, with the faintest tinge of sharpness in her manner.

"The most—what shall I call it ?—inconsequent woman I ever met, mixing up things the most dissimilar together, and never dwelling for an instant on anything."

"How base men are," said Julia, with mock reproach in her voice. "This is the way he talks of a wench he absolutely persecuted with attentions the whole season. Would you believe it, Nelly, we cut up our nice little garden to make a school to train her horse in ?"

Whether it was that some secret intelligence was rapidly conveyed from Julia as she spoke to Nelly, or that the latter of herself caught up

the quizzing spirit of her attack, but the two girls burst out laughing, and George blushed deeply, in shame and irritation.

"First of all," said he, stammering with confusion, "she had a little Arab, the wickedest animal I ever saw. It wasn't safe to approach him; he struck out with his forelegs——"

"Come, Nelly," said Julia, rising, "we'll go into the drawing-room, and leave George to explain how he tamed the Arab and captivated the Arab's mistress, for your brother might like to learn the secret. You'll join us, gentlemen, when you wish for coffee."

"That was scarcely fair, Julia dear," said Nelly, when they were alone. "Your banter is sometimes too sharp for him."

"I can't help it, dearest—it is part of my nature. When I was a child, they could not take me to a wild-beast show, for I would insist on poking straws at the tiger—not that poor dear George has much 'tiger' in him. But do you know, Nelly," said she, in a graver tone, "that, when people are very poor, when their daily lives are beset by the small accidents of narrow fortune, there is a great philosophy in a little banter? You brush away many an annoyance by seeming to feel it matter for drollery, which, if taken seriously, might have made you fretful and peevish."

"I never suspected there was method in your madness, Ju," said Nelly, smiling.

"Nor was there, dearest; the explanation was almost an after-thought. But come now and tell me about yourselves."

"There is really little to tell. Augustus never speaks to me now of business matters. I think I can see that he is not fully satisfied with himself; but, rather than show weakness or hesitation, he is determined to go on as he began."

"And you are really going to this dreary place?"

"He says so."

"Would any good come, I wonder, of bringing your brother and Pracontal together? They are both men of high and generous feelings. Each seems to think that there ought to be some other settlement than a recourse to lawyers. Do you think he would refuse to meet Pracontal?"

"That is a mere chance. There are days he would not listen to such a proposal, and there are times he would accept it heartily; but the suggestion must not come from me. With all his love for me, he rather thinks that I secretly disapprove of what he has done, and would reverse it if I knew how."

"What if I were to hint at it? He already said he wished to see him. This might be mere curiosity, however. What if I were to say, 'Why not meet Pracontal? Why not see what manner of man he is? There is nothing more true than the saying that half the dislikes people conceive against each other would give way if they would condescend to become acquainted.'"

"As I have just said, it is a mere chance whether he would consent, and then——"

"Oh, I know! It would be also a chance what might come of it."

Just as she said this, the young men entered the room, with smiling faces, and apparently in high good-humour.

"Do you know the plan we've just struck out?" cried Bramleigh. "George is to come and live at Cattaro. I'm to make him consular chaplain."

"But is there such an appointment?" asked Julia, eagerly.

"Heaven knows; but if there is not, there ought to be."

"And the salary, Mr. Bramleigh. Who pays it? What is it?"

"There again I am at fault; but her Majesty could never intend we should live like heathens," said Augustus, "and we shall arrange it somehow."

"Oh, if it were not for 'somehow,'" said Julia, "we poor people would be worse off in life than we are; but there are so many what the watch-makers call escapements in existence, the machinery manages to survive scores of accidents."

"At all events we shall be all together," said Augustus, "and we shall show a stouter front to fortune than if we were to confront her singly."

"I think it a delightful plan," said Julia. "What says Nelly?"

"I think," said Nelly, gravely, "that it is more than kind in you to follow us into our banishment."

"Then, let us set off at once," said Augustus, "for I own to you I wish to be out of men's sight, out of ear-shot of their comments, while this suit is going on. It is the publicity that I dread far more than even the issue. Once that we reach this wild barbarism we are going to, you will see I will bear myself with better spirits and better temper."

"And will you not see M. Pracontal before you go?" asked Julia.

"Not if I can avoid it; unless, indeed, you all think I ought."

Julia looked at Nelly, and then at her brother. She looked as if she wanted them to say something—anything; but neither spoke, and then, with a courage that never failed her, she said—

"Of course we think that a meeting between two people who have no personal reasons for dislike, but have a great question to be decided in favour of one of them, cannot but be useful. If it will not lead to a friendship, it may at least disarm a prejudice."

"I wish I had you for my counsel, Julia," said Bramleigh, smiling. "Is it yet too late to send you a brief?"

"Perhaps I am engaged for the other side."

"At all events," said he, more seriously, "if it be a blunder to meet the man, it cannot much matter. The question between us must be decided elsewhere, and we need not add the prejudices of ignorance to the rancour of self-interest. I'll see him."

"That's right; I'm 'sure that's right," said L'Estrange, "I'll despatch a note to Lady Augusta, who is eager for your answer."

CHAPTER XLVI.

A STROLL AND A GOSSIP.

As well to have a long talk together as to enjoy the glorious beauty and freshness of the Campagna, the two young men set out the next morning for a walk to Rome. It was one of those still cold days of winter, with a deep blue sky above, and an atmosphere clear as crystal as they started.

There was not in the fortunes of either of them much to cheer the spirits or encourage hope, and yet they felt—they knew not why—a sense of buoyancy and light-heartedness they had not known for many a day back.

"How is it, George," asked Augustus, "can you explain it, that when the world went well with me, when I could stroll out into my own woods, and walk for hours over my own broad acres, I never felt so cheery as I do to-day?"

"It was the same spirit made you yesterday declare you enjoyed our humble dinner with a heartier zest than those grand banquets that were daily served up at Castello."

"Just so. But that does not solve the riddle for me. I want to know the why of all this. It is no high sustaining consciousness of doing the right thing; no grand sense of self-approval: for, in the first place, I never had a doubt that we were not the rightful owners of the estate, nor am I now supported by the idea that I am certainly and indubitably on the right road, because nearly all my friends think the very reverse." L'Estrange made no answer. Bramleigh went on: "You yourself are so minded, George. Out with it, man; say at once you think me wrong."

"I have too little faith in my own judgment to go that far."

"Well, will you say that you would have acted differently yourself? Come, I think you can answer that question."

"No, I cannot."

"You can't say whether you would have done as I have, or something quite different?"

"No; there is only one thing I know I should have done—I'd have consulted Julia."

If Bramleigh laughed at this avowal the other joined him, and for a while nothing was said on either side. At last Bramleigh said, "I, too, have a confession to make. I thought that if I were to resist this man's claim by the power of superior wealth I should be acting as dishonourably as though I had fought an unarmed man with a revolver. I told Sedley my scruples, but though he treated them with little deference; there they were, and I could not dismiss them. It was this weakness—Sedley would give it no other name than weakness—of mine that made him incline to settle the matter by a compromise. For a while I yielded to the notion; I'm afraid that I yielded even too far—at least Cutbill opines that one of my letters actually gives a distinct consent, but I don't think so. I know

that my meaning was to say to my lawyer, 'This man's claim may push me to publicity and much unpleasantness, without any benefit to him. He may make me a nine-days' wonder in the newspapers and a town-talk, and never reap the least advantage from it. To avoid such exposure I would pay, and pay handsomely; but if you really opined that I was merely stifling a just demand, such a compromise would only bring me lasting misery.' Perhaps I could not exactly define what I meant; perhaps I expressed myself imperfectly and ill; but Sedley always replied to me by something that seemed to refute my reasonings. At the same time Lord Culduff and Temple treated my scruples with an open contempt. I grew irritable, and possibly less reasonable, and I wrote long letters to Sedley to justify myself and sustain the position I had taken. Of these, indeed of none of my letters, have I copies; and I am told now that they contain admissions which will show that I yielded to the plan of a compromise. Knowing, however, what I felt—what I still feel on the matter—I will not believe this. At all events the world shall see now that I leave the law to take its course. If Pracontal can establish his right, let him take what he owns. I only bargain for one thing, which is, not to be expelled ignominiously from the house in which I was never the rightful owner. It is the act of abdication, George—the moment of dethronement, that I could not face. It is an avowal of great weakness, I know; but I struggle against it in vain. Every morning when I awoke the same thought met me, am I a mere pretender here? and by some horrible perversity, which I cannot explain, the place, the house, the grounds, the gardens, the shrubberies, the deer-park, grew inexpressibly more dear to me than ever I had felt them. There was not an old oak on the lawn that I did not love; the shady walks through which I had often passed without a thought upon them grew now to have a hold upon and attraction for me that I cannot describe. What shall I be without these dear familiar spots? What will become of me when I shall no longer have these deep glades, these silent woods, to wander in? This became at last so strong upon me that I felt there was but one course to take—I must leave the place at once, and never return to it till I knew that it was my own beyond dispute. I could do that now, while the issue was still undetermined, which would have broken my heart if driven to do on compulsion. Of course this was a matter between me and my own conscience; I had not courage to speak of it to a lawyer, nor did I. Sedley, however, was vexed that I should take any steps without consulting him. He wrote me a letter—almost an angry letter—and he threatened—for it really amounted to a threat, to say that, to a client so decidedly bent on guiding his own case, he certainly felt his services could scarcely be advantageously contrabated. I rejoined, perhaps not without irritation; and I am now expecting by each post either his submission to my views, or to hear that he has thrown up the direction of my cause."

"And he was your father's adviser for years!" said L'Estrange, with a tone almost despondent.

"But for which he never would have assumed the tone of dictation he has used towards me. Lord Onlduff, I remember, said, 'The first duty of a man on coming to his property is to change his agent, and his next to get rid of the old servants.' I do not like the theory, George; but from a certain point of view it is not without reason."

"I suspect that neither you nor I want to look at life from that point of view," said L'Estrange with some emotion.

"Not till we can't help it, I'm sure; but these crafty men of the world say that we all arrive at their *modus operandi* in the end; that however generously, however trustfully and romantically, we start on the morning of life, before evening we come to see that in this game we call the world it is only the clever player that escapes ruin."

"I don't—that is, I won't believe that."

"Quite right, George. The theory would tell terribly against fellows like us; for let us do our very best we must be bunglers at the game. What a clever pair of hacks are those yonder! that grey the lady is on has very showy action."

"Look at the liver chestnut the groom is riding,—there's the horse for my money,—so long and so low,—a regular turnspit, and equal to any weight. I declare, that's Lady Augusta, and that's Pracontal with her. See how the Frenchman charges the ex-fences; he'll come to grief if he rides at speed against timber."

The party on horseback passed in a little dip of the ground near them at a smart canter, and soon were out of sight again.

"What a strange intimacy for her, is it not?"

"Julia says, the dash of indiscretion in it was the temptation she couldn't resist, and I suspect she's right. She said to me herself one day, 'I love skating, but I never care for it except the ice is so thin that I hear it giving way on every side as I go.'

"She gave you her whole character in that one trait. The pleasure that wasn't linked to a peril had no charm for her. She ought, however, to see that the world will regard this intimacy as a breach of decency."

"So she does; she's dying to be attacked about it; at least, so Julia says."

"The man too, if he be an artful fellow, will learn many family details about us, that may disserve us. If it went no further than to know in what spirit we treat his claim,—whether we attach importance to his pretensions or not,—these are all things he need not, should not be informed upon."

"Cuthill, who somehow hears everything, told us t'other morning, that Pracontal is 'posted up,'—that was his phrase—as to the temper and nature of every member of your family, and knows to a certainty how to deal with each."

"Then I don't see why we should meet."

"Julia says it is precisely for that very reason; people are always disparaged by these biographical notices, their capacities are assumed to be

tastes, and their mere humours are taken for traits of character ; and she declares that it will be a good service to the truth that bringing you together. Don't take my version, however, of her reasons, but ask her to give them to you herself."

"Isn't that the wall of the City ? I declare we are quite close to Rome already. Now then, first to leave my name for Lady Augusta—not sorry to know I shall not find her at home, for I never understood her, George. I never do understand certain people, whether their levity means that it is the real nature, or simply a humour put on to get rid of you ; as though to say, rather than let you impose any solemnity upon me, or talk seriously, I'll have a game at shuttlecock !"

"She always puzzled me," said L'Estrange, "but that wasn't hard to do."

"I suspect, George, that neither you nor I know much about women."

"For my part, I know nothing at all about them."

"And I not much."

After this frank confession on either side, they walked along, each seemingly deep in his own thought, and said little till they reached the City. Leaving them, then, on their way to Lady Augusta's house, where Bramleigh desired to drop his card, we turn for a moment to the little villa at Albano, in front of which a smart groom was leading a lady's horse, while in the distance a solitary rider was slowly walking his horse, and frequently turning his looks towards the gate of the villa.

The explanation of all this was, that Lady Augusta had taken the opportunity of being near the L'Estranges to pay a visit to the Bramleighs, leaving Pracontal to wait for her till she came out.

"This visit is for you, Nelly," said Julia, as she read the card ; "and I'll make my escape."

She had but time to get out of the room when Lady Augusta entered.

"My dear child," said she, rushing into Nelly's arms, and kissing her with rapturous affection. "My dear child, what a happiness to see you again, and how well you are looking ; you're handsomer, I declare, than Marion. Yes, darling,—don't blush ; it's perfectly true. Where's Augustus ? has he come with you ?"

"He has gone in to Rome to see you," said Nelly, whose face was still crimson, and who felt flurried and agitated by the flighty impetuosity of the other.

"I hope it was to say that you are both coming to me ? Yes, dearest, I'll take no excuse. It would be a town-talk if you stopped anywhere else ; and I have such a nice little villa—a mere baby-house ; but quite large enough to hold 'you ; and my brother-in-law will take Augustus about, and show him Rome, and I shall have you all to myself. We have much to talk of, haven't we ?"

Nelly mumbled an assent, and the other continued.

"It's all so sudden, and so dreadful,—one doesn't realize it ; at least I don't. And it usually takes me an hour or two of a morning to convince

me that we are all ruined ; and then I set to work thinking how I'm to live on—I forget exactly what—how much is it, darling ? Shall I be able to keep my dear horses ? I'd rather die than part with Ben Axir : one of the Sultan's own breeding ; an Arab of blue blood, Nelly,—think of that ! I've refused fabulous sums for him ; but he is such a love, and follows me everywhere, and rears up when I scold him,—and all to be swept away as if it was a dream. What do you mean to do, dearest ? Marry, of course. I know that,—but in the meanwhile ? "

" We are going to Cattaro. Augustus has been named consul there."

" Darling child, you don't know what you are saying. Isn't a consul a horrid creature that lives in a seaport, and worries merchant seamen, and imprisons people who have no passports ? "

" I declare I haven't a notion of his duties," said Nelly, laughing.

" Oh, I know them perfectly. Papa always wrote to the consul about getting heavy baggage through the custom-house ; and when our servants quarrelled with the porters, or the hotel people, it was the consul sent some of them to jail ; but you are aware, darling, he isn't a creature one knows. They are simply impossible, dear, impossible." And as she spoke she lay back in her chair, and fanned herself as though actually overcome by the violence of her emotion.

" I must hope Augustus will not be impossible ; " and Nelly said this with a dry mixture of humour and vexation.

" He can't help it, dearest. It will be from 'no fault of his own. Let a man be what he may, once he derogates there's an end of him. It sounds beautifully, I know, to say that he will remain gentleman and man of station through all the accidents of life ; so he might, darling, so long as he did nothing—absolutely nothing. The moment, however, he touches an " *emploi* " it's all over ; from that hour he becomes the custom's creature, or the consul, or the factor, or whatever it be irrevocably. Do you know that is the only way to keep men of family out of small official life ? We should see them keeping lighthouses if it were not for the obloquy."

" And it would be still better than dependence."

" Yes, dearest, in a novel—in a three-volume thing from Mudie—so it would ; but real life is not half so accommodating. I'll talk to Gusty about this myself. And now, do tell me about yourself. Is there no engagement ? no fatal attachment that all this change of fortune has blighted ? Who is he, dearest ? tell me all ! You don't know what a wonderful creature I am for expedients. There never was the like of me for resources. I could always pull any one through a difficulty but myself."

" I am sorry I have no web to offer you for disentanglement."

" So then he has behaved well ; he has not deserted you in your change of fortune ? "

" There is really no one in the case," said Nelly, laughing. " No one to be either faithful or unworthy."

" Worse again, dearest. There is nothing so good at your age as an

unhappy attachment. A girl without a grievance always mopes ; and," added she, with a marked acuteness of look, "moping ages one quicker than downright grief. The eyes get a heavy expression, and the mouth drags at the corners, and the chin—isn't it funny, now, such a stolid feature as the chin should take on to worry us?—but the chin widens and becomes square, like those Egyptian horrors in the Museum."

"I must look to that," said Nelly, gravely. "I'd be shocked to find my chin betraying me."

"And men are such wretches. There is no amount of fretting they don't exact from us; but if we show any signs of it afterwards,—any hard lines about the eyes, or any patchiness of colour in the cheek,—they cry out, 'Isn't she gone off?' That's their phrase, 'Isn't she gone off?'"

"How well you understand; how well you read them?"

"I should think I do; but after all, dearest, they have very few devices; if it wasn't that they can get away, run off to the clubs and their other haunts, they would have no chance with us. See how they fare in country-houses, for instance. How many escape there! What a nice stuff your dress is made of!"

"It was very cheap."

"No matter; it's English. That's the great thing here. Any one can buy a 'gros.' What one really wants is a nameless texture and a neutral tint. You must positively walk with me on the Pincian in that dress. Roman men remark everything. You'll not be ten minutes on the promenade till every one will know whether you wear two buttons on your gloves or three."

"How odious!"

"How delightful! Why, my dear child, for whom do we dress? Not for each other; no more than the artists of a theatre act or sing for the rest of the company. Our audience is before us; not always a very enlightened or cultivated one, but always critical. There, do look at that stupid groom; see how he suffers my horse to lag behind: the certain way to have him kicked by the other; and I should die, I mean really die if anything happened to Ben Azir. By the way how well our parson rides. I declare I like him better in the saddle than in the pulpit. They rave here about the way he jumps the ox-fences. You must say 'tant des choses' for me, to him and his sister, whom I fear I have treated shamefully. I was to have had her to dinner one day, and I forgot all about it; but she didn't mind, and wrote me the prettiest note in the world. But I always say, it is so easy for people of small means to be good-tempered. They have no jealousies about going here or there; no heart-burnings that such a one's lace is Brussels point, and much finer than their own. Don't you agree with me? There, I knew it would come to that. He's got the snaffle out of Ben Azir's mouth, and he's sure to break away."

"That gentleman apparently has come to the rescue. See, he has dismounted to set all to rights."

"How polite of him. Do you know him, dear?"

"No. I may have seen him before. I'm so terribly short-sighted, and this glass does not suit me; but I must be going. I suppose I had better thank that strange man, hadn't I? Oh, of course, dearest, you would be too bashful; but I'm not. My old governess, Madame de Forgeon, used to say that English people never knew how to be bashful; they only looked culpable. And I protest she was right."

"The gentleman is evidently waiting for your gratitude; he is standing there still."

"What an observant puss it is," said Lady Augusta, kissing her. "Tell Gusty to come and see me. Settle some day to come in and dine, and bring the parson: he's a great favourite of mine. Where have I dropped my gauntlet? Oh, here it is. Pretty whip, isn't it? A present, a sort of a love-gift from an old Russian prince, who wanted me to marry him; and I said I was afraid; that I heard Russians knouted their wives. And so he assured me I should have the only whip he ever used, and sent me this. It was neat, or rather, as Dumas says, '*La plaisanterie n'était pas mal pour un Cossaque.*' Good-by, dearest, good-by."

So actually exhausted was poor Nelly by the rattling impetuosity of Lady Augusta's manner, her sudden transitions, and abrupt questionings, that, when Julia entered the room, and saw her lying back in a chair, wearied-looking and pale, she asked—

"Are you ill, dear?"

"No; but I am actually tired. Lady Augusta has been an hour here, and she has talked till my head turned."

"I feel for you sincerely. She gave me one of the worst headaches I ever had, and then made my illness a reason for staying all the evening here to bathe my temples."

"That was good-natured, however."

"So I'd have thought, too, but that she made George always attend her with the ice and the eau-de-cologne, and thus maintained a little ambulant flirtation with him, that, sick as I was, almost drove me mad."

"She means nothing, I am certain, by all these levities, or, rather, she does not care what they mean; but here come our brothers, and I am eager for news, if they have any."

"Where's George?" asked Julia, as Augustus entered alone.

"Sir Marcus Something caught him at the gate, and asked to have five minutes with him."

"That means putting off dinner for an hour at least," said she, half pettishly. "I must go and warn the cook."

CHAPTER XLVII.

A PROPOSAL IN FEEBLE.

When Sir Marcus Clifff was introduced into L'Estrange's study, his first care was to divest himself of his various "wraps," a process not very unlike that of the French gravedigger. At length, he arrived at a sort of

entire chamois-leather, in which he stood forth like an enormous frog, and sorely pushed the parson's gravity in consequence.

"This is what Hazeldean calls the 'chest-sufferer's true cuticle.' Nothing like leather, my dear sir, in pulmonic affections. If I'd have known it earlier in life, I'd have saved half of my left lung, which is now hopelessly hepatalized."

L'Estrange looked compassionate, though not very well knowing what it was he had pity for.

"Not," added the invalid hastily, "that even this constitutes a grave constitutional defect. Davies says in his second volume that among the robust men of England you would not find one in twenty without some lunular derangement. He percussed me all over, and was some time before he found out the blot." The air of triumph in which this was said showed L'Estrange that he too might afford to look joyful.

"So that, with this reservation, sir, I do consider I have a right to regard myself, as Borcas pronounced me, sound as a roach."

"I sincerely hope so."

"You see, sir, I mean to be frank with you. I descend to no concealments."

It was not very easy for L'Estrange to understand this speech, or divine what especial necessity there was for his own satisfaction as to the condition of Sir Marcus Cluff's viscera; he, however, assented in general terms to the high esteem he felt for candour and openness.

"No, my dear Mr. L'Estrange," resumed he, "without this firm conviction—a sentiment based on faith and the stethoscope together—you had not seen me here this day."

"The weather is certainly trying," said L'Estrange.

"I do not allude to the weather, sir; the weather is, for the season, remarkably fine weather; there was a mean temperature of 68° Fahrenheit during the last twenty-four hours. I spoke of my pulmonary condition, because I am aware people are in the habit of calling me consumptive. It is the indiscriminating way ignorance treats a very complex question; and when I assured you that without an honest conviction that organic mischief had not proceeded far, I really meant what I said when I told you you would not have seen me here this day."

Again was the parson mystified, but he only bowed.

"Ah, sir," sighed the other, "why will not people be always candid and sincere? And when shall we arrive at the practice of what will compel—actually compel sincerity? I tell you, for instance, I have an estate worth so much—house property here, and shares in this or that company—but there are mortgages, I don't say how much, against me; I have no need to say it. You drive down to the Registration Office and you learn to a shilling to what extent I am liable. Why not have the same system for physical condition, sir? Why can't you call on the College of Physicians, or whatever the body be, and say, 'How is Sir Marcus Cluff? I'd like to know about that right auricle of his heart.'

"What about his pancreas ?' Don't you perceive the inestimable advantage of what I advise ?"

"I protest, sir, I scarcely follow you. I do not exactly see how I have the right, or to what extent I am interested, to make this inquiry."

"You amaze—you actually amaze me !" and Sir Marcus sat for some seconds contemplating the object of his astonishment. "I come here, sir, to make an offer for your sister's hand——"

"Pardon my interrupting, but I learn this intention only now."

"Then you didn't read my note. You didn't read the 'turn over.'"

"I'm afraid not. I only saw what referred to the church."

"Then, sir, you missed the most important ; had you taken the trouble to turn the page, you would have seen that I ask your permission to pay my formal attentions to Miss L'Estrange. It was with intention I first discussed and dismissed a matter of business ; I then proceeded to a question of sentiment, premising that I held myself bound to satisfy you regarding my property, and my pulmonary condition. Mind, body, and estate, sir, are not coupled together ignorantly, nor inharmoniously ; as you know far better than me,—mind, body, and estate," repeated he, slowly. "I am here to satisfy you on each of them."

"Don't you think, Sir Marcus, that there are questions which should possibly precede these ?"

"Do you mean Miss L'Estrange's sentiments, sir ?" George bowed, and Sir Marcus continued : "I am vain enough to suppose I can make out a good case for myself. I look more, but I'm only forty-eight, forty-eight on the twelfth September. I have twenty-seven thousand pounds in bank stock—stock, mind you,—and three thousand four hundred a year in land, Norfolk property. I have a share—we'll not speak of it now—in a city house ; and what's better than all, sir, not sixpence of debt in the world. I am aware your sister can have no fortune, but I can afford myself, what the French call a caprice, though this ain't a caprice, for I have thought well over the matter, and I see she would suit me perfectly. She has nice gentle ways, she can be soothing without depression, and calm without discouragement. Ah, that is the secret of secrets ! She gave me my drops last evening with a tenderness, a graceful sympathy, that went to my heart. I want that, sir—I need it, I yearn for it. Simpson said to me years ago, 'Marry, Sir Marcus, marry ! yours is a temperament that requires study and intelligent care. A really clever woman gets to know a pulse to perfection ; they have a finer sensibility, a higher organization, too, in the touch.' Simpson laid great stress on that ; but I have looked out in vain, sir. I employed agents ; I sent people abroad ; I advertised in *The Times*—M. C. was in the second column—for above two years ; and with a correspondence that took two clerks to read through and minute. All to no end ! All in vain ! They tell me the really competent people never do reply to an advertisement ; that one must look out for them oneself, make private personal inquiry. Well, sir, I did that, and I got into some unpleasant scrapes with it, and two actions for breach of

promise: two thousand pounds the last cost me, though I got my verdict, sir; the Chief Baron very needlessly recommending me, for the future, to be cautious in forming the acquaintance of ladies, and to avoid widows as a general rule. These are the pleasantries of the Bench, and doubtless they amuse the junior bar. I declare to you, sir, in all seriousness, I'd rather that a man should give me a fillip on the nose than take the liberty of a joke with me. It is the one insufferable thing in life." This sally had so far excited him that it was some minutes ere he recovered his self-possession. "Now, Mr. L'Estrange," said he, at last, "I bind you in no degree—I pledge you to nothing; I simply ask leave to address myself to your sister. It is what lawyers call a 'motion to show cause why.'"

"I perceive that," broke in L'Estrange; "but even that much I ought not to concede without consulting my sister and obtaining her consent. You will allow me therefore time."

"Time, sir! My nerves must not be agitated. There can be no delays. It was not without a great demand on my courage, and a strong dose of chlorodine—Japps's preparation—that I made this effort now. Don't imagine I can sustain it much longer. No, sir, I cannot give time."

"After all, Sir Marcus, you can scarcely suppose that my sister is prepared for such a proposition."

"Sir, they are always prepared for it. It never takes them unawares. I have made them my study for years, and I do think I have some knowledge of their way of thinking and acting. I'll lay my life on it, if you will go and say, 'Maria'!"

"My sister's name is Julia," said the other, dryly.

"It may be, sir—I said 'Maria' generically, and I repeat it—'Maria, there is in my study at this moment a gentleman, of irreproachable morals and unblemished constitution, whose fortune is sufficiently ample to secure many comforts and all absolute necessaries, who desires to make you his wife;' her first exclamation will be, 'It is Sir Marcus Cluff.'"

"It is not impossible," said L'Estrange, gravely.

"The rest, sir, is not with you, nor even with me. Do me, then, the great favour to bear my message."

Although seeing the absurdity of the situation, and vaguely forecasting the way Julia might possibly hear the proposition, L'Estrange was always so much disposed to yield to the earnestness of any one who persisted in a demand, that he bowed and left the room.

"Well, George, he has proposed?" cried Julia, as her brother entered the room, where she sat with Nelly Bramleigh.

He nodded only, and the two girls burst out into a merry laugh.

"Come, come, Julia," said he, reprovingly. "Absurd as it may seem, the man is in earnest, and must be treated with consideration."

"But tell us the whole scene. Let us have it all as it occurred."

"I'll do nothing of the kind. It's quite enough to say that he declares he has a good fortune, and wishes to share it with you, and I

think the expression of that wish should secure him a certain deference and respect."

"But who refuses, who thinks of refusing him all the deference and respect he could ask for? Not I, certainly. Come now, like a dear good boy, let us hear all he said, and what you replied. I suspect there never was a better bit of real-life comedy. I only wish I could have had a part in it."

"Not too late yet, perhaps," said Nelly, with a dry humour. "The fifth act is only beginning."

"That is precisely what I am meditating. George will not tell me accurately what took place in his interview, and I think I could not do better than go and learn Sir Marcus' sentiments for myself."

She arose and appeared about to leave the room when L'Estrange sprang towards the door, and stood with his back against it.

"You're not serious, Ju?" cried he, in amazement.

"I should say very serious. If Sir Marcus only makes out his case, as favourably as you, with all your bungling, can't help representing it, why—all things considered, eh, Nelly? *you*, I know, agree with me—I rather suspect the proposition might be entertained."

"Oh, this is too monstrous. It is beyond all belief," cried L'Estrange. And he rushed from the room in a torrent of passion, while Julia sank back in a chair, and laughed till her eyes ran over with tears of merriment.

"How could you, Julia! Oh, how could you!" said Nelly, as she leaned over her and tried to look reproachful.

"If you mean, how could I help quizzing him? I can understand you; but I could not. No, Nelly, I could not. It is my habit to seize on the absurd side of any embarrassment; and you may be sure there is always one if you only look for it; and you've no idea how much pleasanter—ay, and easier too—it is to laugh oneself out of difficulties than to grieve over them. You'll see George, now, will be spirited up, out of pure fright, to do what he ought: to tell this man that his proposal is an absurdity, and that young women, even as destitute of fortune as myself, do not marry as nusetenders. There! I declare that is Sir Marcus driving away already. Only think with what equanimity I can see wealth and title taking leave of me. Never say after that that I have not courage."

Recollections of Gibson the Sculptor.

I WAS introduced to John Gibson by an English lady who had known him for some years. It was on a bright day of a Roman February that I turned, from the Via Babuino, into the little by-street called Via Fontanella in which was his studio.

The first room opening upon the street contained duplicates of a great many of his works. I saw copies in marble of his "Aurora," his "Wounded Amazon," his "Flora," of his two famous bassi-relievi, "Phœton driving the Chariot of the Sun," "The Hours leading the Horses of the Sun," &c. &c., and plaster casts of others crowded together, with some relics of Wyatt and of another sculptor, a protégé of Gibson's, who had died in Rome some years ago.

After going across a small garden full of pale winter roses and spring violets, and with a fern-veiled fountain in the centre, we entered the room in which he was at that moment working. He was modelling a monumental basso-relievo. I was struck then on this our first meeting, as I always was afterwards, whenever I saw him, with the combination of three distinctive and usually antagonistic qualities in his manner and bearing: extreme simplicity, blended with acute shrewdness and resolute firmness.

In person he was very handsome; of middle height and well-knit figure. The head was well placed on the shoulders, and the feet and hands were in good proportion. The medallion cast I have of his profile is beautiful. The features are regular and noble, the chin strong and firm, the eyes deep-set, the brow straight, not very high, but full over the temples, and projecting slightly over the eyes. The face itself was intellectual and expressive. Gibson had longed from his earliest years to be a sculptor and to go to Rome. He fulfilled both wishes. No life professed more unity of purpose; no life more strenuously carried out its profession. The study of sculpture as a classic art, and carrying out the result of such study in his work, were the alpha and omega of his being. He was intelligent and upright; but his one creed in religion and his one code in morals were belief in, and devotion to, art. His whole life was spent as a votary of that faith. He has often told me that he had been in youth a docile and obedient lad, with no desire to break established routine in anything; but it was literally impossible for him to pursue the trade to which he had been apprenticed. He left it and he might have been imprisoned for breaking his indentures, but fortunately his master was of milder or more sympathetic nature than others of his class, and through the kind interest

of Roscoe, the historian and true follower of the mediæval *Misèneras*, Lorenzo de' Medici, he was enabled to leave his first calling, and to apply himself to his true vocation.

He had a good many friends in his youth among medical students. His anatomical studies led him into their society, and he used to say that his marvellous knowledge of the proportions and muscular development of the human figure was chiefly acquired in the dissecting-rooms he frequented with them. There was a difficulty in procuring subjects for dissection at that time, so that medical students were often employed themselves, or employed others, in procuring dead bodies for that purpose.

I have heard him tell, with simple and graphic force, anecdotes of this period of his life which might have been worked up by Edgar Poe into awful and fear-inspiring romances. One of these stories he told with great tenderness. He and some of his friends had obtained the right, by payment of a considerable sum, of disinterring the corpse of a person who had lately died in a hospital. They went to the churchyard at night and dug up the coffin. No particulars of the sex or age of the corpse had been given. It was a bright moonlight night, and when the lid was removed a beautiful young woman was discovered beneath the pauper's shroud. She had been too lately buried for death to alter her beauty, and she lay before them so white and lovely, with her smooth hair braided over her forehead and hanging down round the delicate throat, that these wild youths were awed. "We stood quite still looking at her," he said, "and then, without a word, the coffin was closed and we lowered it into the ground again. We had not spoken a syllable, but we all had felt alike that it was impossible to touch her." I fancy I have traced some shadowy recollection of this incident on one of his monumental bassi-relievi. He used to tell another story which he called a ghost-story, whenever the conversation turned on apparitions or spectres. I heard him tell this one at Knebworth to Lord Lytton (he was then Sir Edward) and to Mr. Forster. The story dated at the time he was apprenticed to a chimney-piece carver and manufacturer. It was the custom in this establishment for one of the young men employed in the manufactory to sleep in the warehouse every night. They took it by turns to do so, week by week. The yard and ground-floor offices were encumbered by pieces of marble and masses of stone, chimney-pieces and other specimens of work, and the property was too valuable to be left unguarded. The person left in charge slept on the first floor.

The night that was to commence Gibson's week of guard, some of his surgeon friends had asked him to deposit in the warehouse, a coffin which had been exhumed for the purposes of dissection. It was a good place of concealment. The superstitious horror of the practice of dissection was at its fever height at that moment. The name of resurrectionist was equivalent to that of murderer. It was a service of peril to obtain a body for anatomical purposes. The transfer of the body or coffin, when dissec-

tarred, from the grave to the surgeon's operating-room, was always attended with risk, and was generally performed with the greatest secrecy and by the most indirect road. This coffin was to be placed in concealment for the night in the warehouse, and by earliest dawn it was to be taken to the surgeon's. It had been brought in late at night, and was stowed away among the marble and stone fragments. Before Gibson went to bed he made his rounds, armed as usual, and examined well the yard and ground-floor of the warehouse, and found all in order. The blocks of marble and stone, the finished and unfinished work, lay around him, heaped up in apparent disorder, but arranged, nevertheless, in a certain method evident to an accustomed observer. When he went to bed he was more wakeful than usual, and lay on his pillow looking through the window opposite his bed, at the bright full moon filling his room with clear white light. At last, the stillness and the radiance became oppressive. His thoughts turned to the corpse in the warehouse below, as silent and as cold as the inanimate stone around it. Was it in truth so? What if it were less motionless than he supposed it to be? What if the spirit which had once animated it should come to expostulate with the sacrilegious persons who had disturbed it, and avenge itself on the one left with it? His imagination, once roused in this direction, played traitor, as it always does, and added to his fears. He fancied he heard stealthy steps coming up the stairs. Twice he thought he heard the door of his room open. He sat up in bed breathlessly awaiting the entrance of something or some one. He mistook the folds of the curtains for a spectral creature in white floating towards him. He was sensible enough to feel that he was the victim of optical delusions, but his heart beat and his breath came short, as if, beyond and beside that terror which he was conscious was self-created, some presence intangible and invisible to his senses shared with him the solitude of the place, pervading it from garret to basement. While he thus remained almost paralysed with fright, there suddenly sounded from below a report like the rending open of a rock: at another short interval was another, and again another. He confessed he was fairly overcome with fear. He drew the bed-clothes over his head, and was for a few minutes insensible. When he was again conscious the moon had set, it was quite dark, and the darkness gradually renewed his sinking courage.

He recovered himself into calmness, struck a light, dressed himself, and went downstairs. All was barred, and shut as he had left it, but on glancing towards the coffin, he became aware that it had been pushed or had slipped from its place on a block of marble. It had been put down hastily and carelessly, and very little force was needed to topple it over. In falling, an enormous mass which was heaved in front of it and had been standing upright, had been pushed off its balance, and had fallen first on some pieces of stone, which, unable to bear its weight, had slipped from under it, and left it prostrate.

These were the effects he beheld, but what was the cause? He explored in and out the labyrinth of stone-heaps, his one candle projecting uncanny shadows as he moved about: at last he spied the bright wild eyes of a cat, shining like red carbuncles under a ledge of stone. The cat was the ghost. Curious about the coffin, the creature had pushed at it, till it had displaced it and caused the overthrow of the stone and marble.

Gibson always called this his ghost-story; it was vain to tell him it had nought to do with the name. He was persistent that it was a ghost-story, though there was no ghost in it. I must own he told it most graphically, and the frank confession of fear was worthy of so resolute a man as he always proved himself to be.

Though he was nearly fifty years in Rome, he never lost his thoroughly English look. He was liked by his workmen, and Signor Giovanni was a power among scarpellini and formatori. He often described to me his life in the early years he spent in Rome. To him, for the pursuit of art, there was no other city in the world. He remained there winter and summer, and he maintained that he had not found it unhealthy. "With care,—yes, yes,—with care it was not unhealthy." He always sprinkled his assertions with a very decisive "yes," reiterated in a dry incisive tone and with a firm closing of the lips which was very characteristic. He was very intimate with Lady Davy (Sir Humphry's widow), and he has often described to me their early walks on the Pincian Hill in summer, between four and five in the morning, and his quietly remaining in his studio all day till the heat was over, and never stirring out while the dews were falling. During the early period of his residence in Rome, Canova and Thorwaldsen were also in the Immortal City. He always acknowledged his obligations to Canova, through whose generous introduction he gained his first commission. Gibson has been styled by some the English Canova; but with equal classical purity of type, there is much more vigour in the Englishman than in the Italian. Gibson's "Hunter and Dog" are Greek in beauty and animated life, but there is a severe strength and energy about the figure which attest the Anglo-Saxon fibre in the imagination of the sculptor. Thorwaldsen and he were friends, and many of his most interesting reminiscences were of evenings spent with him at Miss Mackenzie's, the lady who was for a short time engaged to Thorwaldsen. "She was so kind to us all," Gibson used to say; "she was so intelligent and so good. They were golden evenings, and yet nothing could be more primitive than the lodging or ruder than the accommodation. She used to sit on a box while we two occupied the only chairs the apartment boasted of, but never have I spent pleasanter or more cordial evenings than these."

Gibson has been sometimes accused of worldliness and trifling. The accusation was unjust. He looked upon the rich and noble in one light—as persons of art. Sculpture, to be carried to its highest

expression required the support of money, and it was in the interests of art that a wealthy class should exist. Galleries for pictures and statues, splendid decorations, costly monuments, were part of the appanage of historic families, and from them must necessarily come the patronage which enabled an artist to clothe in marble his ideal dreams. These were Gibson's ideas, and the full extent of them. It will be difficult to adduce any instance, in which he allowed himself to be swayed in opinion or theory as to art, to please or flatter the noblest or wealthiest in the land. When the present Duke of Wellington did not agree with him in his interpretation of the fable of Pandora, and wished him to alter some accessories in the statue for which he had given him a commission, Gibson was obdurate. He wrote that his Grace was quite at liberty *not* to take the statue he had ordered, but that he, as an artist, could not alter his conception of what was the proper pose and correct gesture of the figure. Lady Marian Alford purchased it *finaly*. He was equally indifferent to the criticism of newspapers. At the time that the press were very bitter in their attacks on his statue of Sir Robert Peel, he told me his friends were anxious that he should not see the newspapers. "Oh, let them bark," he said. "The statue is on its pedestal, and the 4,000 guineas are in my pocket." But to suggestions from those whose artistic knowledge he respected, he was always attentive, and sometimes yielded to their judgment in preference to his own. But it was necessary that they should be adepts in the mysteries of which he was a master.

He was not, as may be supposed from his birth and early condition in life, an educated man; but his brother was a scholar, and as he lived with him for many years, Gibson thus acquired a certain portion of classical knowledge. It was almost touching to hear how his poetical imagination revelled in the beautiful Greek legends. He used to speak of them as if to all they were as new and as vivid as to himself. In his keen sensibility to beauty of form and power of portraying it, this Welshman, lowly born and little cultivated as he was, might have been a Greek himself. There are twelve drawings of a dancer, studies he made from Cerito, which will explain what I mean. The bounding grace, the divine ecstasy of motion in a thoroughly well-poised and beautiful form, animated by the joyous spirit of youth, are admirably portrayed in the various attitudes of the figure delineated in these sketches.

This reminds me of an anecdote he used to relate, how he had stopped the mouth of some vulgar person, who chose to think that, because he or she was admitted to the studio, he might criticize the works he was allowed to see to the artist. "Mr. Gibson, your figure of the dancing-girl is very beautiful; but there is surely an error in it?" "Yes?" "Her feet and ankles are too small and slender. It is a well-known fact that professional dancers have large feet and thick ankles. Over-exertion of the muscles—eh?" "Yes, sir; but my dancing-girl is *not* professional. She does not dance for hire. The rule does not hold good with her, for

she—yes, she dances for her own pleasure, and does not over-exert her muscles."

His opinions about Rome and the Romans were peculiar, and would be unpopular just now. Rome, he said, should be left to art. "It is good for nothing else ; and for what better purpose could it exist ? It has had its political and religious supremacy ; now, let it keep its artistic superiority." He wished it to be better governed ; but he had not a lofty opinion of the people. Physically, their grace and their beauty attracted him ; but their lawlessness, their childish violence, their pitiful cheats were repulsive to his nature. He saw them as they were, without any hallucination from political ambition or enthusiasm.

His most beautiful model, Grazia, was the frequent subject of his conversation. Her sordid avarice, her fierce chastity, her furious temper, were studies to him ; and the contrast which her moral nature presented to her beauty, was graphically described. He told me once that to pacify this wild panther of a woman he had uttered the only deliberate lie he was conscious of since his mother, a stern Puritan, had flogged him at three years old for uttering some falsehood about an apple. An English lady who had often heard of Grazia's marvellous beauty, asked permission to see her as she was sitting for her bust to Gibson. The lady looked at her and said she was handsome, but that her expression was bad. "She looks as if she had a vile temper." Grazia did not understand the words, but she read from the expression that it was something unfavourable. She started up. "Signor Giovanni, that woman has insulted me, I know. What did she say ? Tell her I am a Roman, and that she is a miserable foreigner. Tell me what she said, or I will go and never return." "She said you were very beautiful, Grazia." "What else ?" "What else could she say ?" Grazia believed in him implicitly and was satisfied. He said she was quite capable of personally maltreating the lady if he had said the truth.

I accompanied Gibson once to see Rachel. He did not understand French, but the gestures, the tragic intensity, the classic beauty of the great actress enchanted him. Her wonderful by-play, the manner in which she listened, stood, and moved, were delightful to him. He was very critical on female dresses. He wished women to wear drapery, as in the classic age,—a sheet fastened by a button on the shoulder, and hair pulled low down over the brows. My memory is full of anecdotes and sayings of his. To me he was always a most interesting study. The artists of to-day are either men of the world, gentlemen of fashion and position, luxurious, in habits, and refined to Sybaritism in their mode of living, or Bohemians. *pur et simple*. Gibson was as hardy and as frugal as if he had never left his Welsh hills, and yet as orderly and thoroughly correct as if he had been a respectable "gigman" in a thriving English town. The soft relaxations of that Cirecean climate were unknown to him. The subtle enervation to brain and moral fibre, which is almost inseparable from the pursuit of art,

was unfelt by him. His industry was remarkable. I was once eight years absent from Rome, and he showed me on my return eight statues which had been designed and modelled in that interval.

At six o'clock, summer and winter, the old man was always to be found taking an early cup of coffee in the Caffé Greco—the favourite resort of the artists in Rome. How they must miss him in that accustomed haunt! The genial smile, the keen bright eyes, the pithy speech, so familiar to all who frequented it, are indissolubly connected with that spot, and in any age but this—so forgetful of its dead fames,—pilgrimages would be made to the Caffe Greco by neophytes in the same career, for the sake of *their* hallowed and revered memories. For half-a-century he devoted himself day by day to his profession—to sculpture as he understood it, the representation of beauty. He did not attempt to make art a moral teacher. Indirectly it might become so, but it should have but one legitimate and direct aim—beauty. What it might suggest was beyond and beside this. It depended on the eye that saw, and not on the hand that wrought.

The legacy of his life's earnings to the Royal Academy has been blamed by some, but I think the blame unjust. He did not wrong his own family by this generosity to art. Art was his wife, his child, his family. To bequeath to future students the lesson of an artist's life, laborious effort, and successful achievement, seems to me an honourable aim and a worthy result.

Notes on National Characteristics in the Scottish Lowlands.

In no country perhaps, taking into consideration its small size, are to be observed so many different types of feature and form among its inhabitants as in Scotland. It is owing no doubt to the variety of peoples which have at one time either invaded or settled in the country ; but the tendency of the age is so decidedly to efface rather than to develop distinctions of race and character, that it is surprising this diversity should not have died out more extensively. On the decline of the Roman Empire, the south-east of Scotland was seized on by the Saxons and Angles, the Scots or Gaels from Ireland, otherwise Kelts, swarmed on the north and west, while the Scandinavians, Norsemen, Danes, and Frisians invaded and colonized the coast. And to this day we must still look for the Kelt in the Western Highlands, for the Scandinavian type as we approach the east or western shores, and for the Saxon, more or less pure, in the Lowlands. In the shires of Berwick, Roxburgh, Peebles, Dumfries, and the Lothians the farmers are an exceedingly fine lengthy breed of men, six feet to six feet three inches of stature being by no means uncommon. They have well-formed hands and feet, long thighs, are broad in the shoulder, but spare in flesh, and, unlike the English of the same class, they retain the last peculiarity in an advanced period of life. They are intelligent, cautious, prudent in their money affairs, and well educated ; and their labouring men are not very far behind them in their good qualities. Between them and the fishermen, or, as they are generally called, the fishers, there is in almost every point a marked difference.

In some measure springing from original difference of stock and blood, strengthened by the daily and hourly contemplation of examples in daring of a kind peculiarly stirring, deepened and intensified by precept and tradition, so are born and nurtured the characteristics which make the distinguishing features of our maritime population as compared with our inland people. Separated sometimes by a mile or two, sometimes only by a few hundred yards, the fishermen and the villagers dwell side by side yet apart—neighbours in the sense of contiguity, and which admits of a friendly exchange in the way of barter, but not neighbours in any sense which indicates a similarity of custom, sentiment, or social relationship. All along the coast of Cumberland, Northumberland, and on the east and west of Scotland there are clusters or little colonies of fishers, whose peculiar characteristics and wild isolated life and fashions are easily remarked, and present themselves in a striking and unvarying form. In

the *Bride of Lammermoor* we have Coldingham village and Coldingham shore ; in some places it is the town and the cove, or the high town and the fisher town. The men of Buckhaven differ from the men of Newhaven, who are supposed to have originally sprung from a set of Belgian settlers. They are a handsome race, especially the women, and as they marry almost entirely among themselves, and observe certain odd regulations of their own in such matters, they increase and prosper in spite of their isolation. A study of the manners and customs of a fisher village may not be without interest. Take one of the kind at random, composed say of thirty or forty men with their families, in this instance claiming to be of pure Danish stock. The cottages are generally built as near as possible to the sea and of rough-hewn stone, the walls being exceedingly deep and solid, so as to afford much warmth and shelter. They front to the land, as need is, on account of the violence of the storms. Often, by way of further precaution, they are arranged in the form of a square, the centre of which is the common receptacle for lobster-traps, buoys, and other fishing-gear, but the little porch and double door which so often form a portion of the north-country cottage, to add to the seclusion and comfort of the inmates, is rarely seen in the fisher's hut. The mortal stillness in the midday of the fisher village is the result of the circumstance that most of the men are in their beds, only a few women and one or two embryo fishers and fishwives of ten or twelve years of age peer out of the door at the passing stranger. The stinks (may the word be pardoned) are strong and various, the midden or ash-heap is handy and close to the door, and how dear that institution is to the heart of the Scotch there is no need to tell. Some years ago, when the cholera was approaching our shores, committees were appointed to see that proper sanitary regulations were observed, and of course the dunghill or midden was the first thing to be removed. One of the women in the village is related by Dean Ramsay to have thus addressed the M.P. who headed the committee,—“Noo, major, ye may tak' our lives, but ye'll no tak' our middens.”

Of the minor conveniences of life the fisher neither recks nor cares. The smells are mostly from the remains of putrid fish, and the grease and mixtures in which the nets are soaked. On one spot, the crest of a noble headland, there is a perfect mountain of remnants of cockles, periwinkles, and herrings, sending forth a most odious savour. Close to it, on a half barrel cut in the form of a chair, may be seen daily, when the sun shines, an old fisher dressed in his usual costume, the patriarch of the community, vaguely supposed to be in his one-hundredth year. His eyes are dim, and his weather-beaten face looks like a wrinkled mass of orange net-work. On the slopes to his right are spread the nets, scenting the air with their peculiar smell, and at his feet the fishy dead heated by the sun, but before him, for many a broad Scottish mile, lies the blue rippling sea, with a score or two of white sails on it ; and the strong fresh salt breeze is more than meat and drink to the old man, as he sits there, day after day, with that strange far-off gaze so often observable in the eyes of the aged, and

which suggests the idea that they do, however vaguely, realize in some sort the nearness of the silent and shadowy land whither their weary steps are turned. Swarms of red-cheeked, bold-eyed children play round him, sometimes swarthy as Spaniards, sometimes white-haired as if bleached by the sun, but he turns from their noisy childish play seawards, and as he watches the fishers spread their brown nets on the grass, silvered over with the scales of last night's draught of herrings, memories of his youth flit fitfully over his mind, and he talks to himself or gives his orders as he used to do when the gale was fresh, the rocks near, and the night dark. But more commonly he sits silent and motionless, and it would be hard to say whether his wistful gaze is indeed the yearning for the rest that is so near or the vacant and dimmed expression which tells of the dulled senses and fast dying faculties and memory of extreme old age.

All odours, however unsavoury, must needs enter by the doors of these cottages, since the small deep-set windows are rarely opened: they admit light only in a very moderate degree, and of ventilation none—at least so far as human care and foresight can provide against it. When the men are not busy with the fishing, they fetch coal in their own boats, buying it at a very low rate. If they are near the moors they can likewise procure turf on most reasonable terms, so that generally there are plenty of huge blocks of sea-coal in the outhouse, and a good stack of turf hard by. Few spots are warmer, cleaner, or more comfortable than the interior of a fisher's cottage towards evening—the three-cornered glass cupboard well stocked with china, and a blazing fire of coal and turf on the hearth, the lady of the house probably reading a romance of the stirring and supernatural order, of which these people are exceedingly fond. There are in each house sometimes two rooms, and a "but and a ben;" sometimes four rooms; but, however this may be, those who dwell within adhere to the time-honoured custom of sleeping in box-beds, and near the fire. A married couple may occupy another room, but the grandfather, grandchildren, widowed mother, &c. generally have the kitchen, and the other rooms are either let off, or spare nets, fish, coals, onions, &c. are stored there. To our ears this seems a disagreeable custom, and by no means a decent one, and with our habits it would be so, but the charge is not as well-founded as might be supposed, and the reason is simple enough. It is our practice to undress when we go to bed, and to strip and wash when we rise in the morning. With them a bed is simply a place for repose, and thither they retire with little more preparation than an Indian ayah when she coils herself up on her mat.

If the fisher is wet he changes his clothes in the morning for a dry suit of the same kind, kicks off his boots, and sleeps; his wife of night takes off her gown and shoes, possibly her stays, puts on what is known as a bed-gown, but which is a kind of loose jacket, and sleeps also; and if we were to inquire into the habits of the poor class of female domestics, it is probable we should find their *toilette de nuit* to be essentially the same. The fisher performs his ablutions mostly in the open air and on a Sunday

morning ; and the wife, like the housemaid, never dreams of "cleaning" herself until she has finished her dirty work. Now this may be, it perhaps is, inconvenient, but it can hardly be called indecent.

The perpetual contemplation of the ocean always affects the temperament and imagination of those who live near or on it, and still more so when the inland scenery is of a wild and mountainous character. Sometimes black moors flank the coast, shading off to a pale tender green, or striped with purple red clefts as they slope on to the shore, or a long range of heather-covered hills terminate in the steep dark crags of slate, stone, granite, or trap some hundreds of feet high, which hang almost perpendicularly over the water, at such points twenty feet deep even at low tide. To the north and south other peaks are visible, generally the site of ancient ruins of castle, abbey, or church, each the subject of a separate tale or legend. Often a chain of rocks runs so high and deep into the sea, that standing on it the waves roll past to the shore nearly a quarter of a mile off with such strength and swell that one feels out at sea rather than on the main land. Where the cliff is of red sandstone, as in some parts of Fifeshire, most curious and fantastically shaped archways formed by the long action of wind, rain, and sea, are very common, and detached columns full of crevices, which are the home of sea-birds and their young, stand upright in the water ; the white gulls floating about on a sunny day in lazy enjoyment of their privileges form a pretty point in the picture, and here and there the black head of a seal or porpoise rises out of the water. If the fisher village lies near a red sandstone cliff the men never fail to make it useful : they tunnel it so as to make short cuts for themselves on a winter's night, burrow caves in it, or turn small caves into roomy caverns with strong bolted doors to keep all safe—very similar to the limestone caves used as wine-cellars, and even dwelling-houses, in some parts of Touraine. In these the fishers keep their fish, salt, nets, &c.—in former times probably their brandy and other smuggled goods. Very little contraband trade is carried on now, and the business of the coast-guardsmen is chiefly to assist in case of danger to vessels. They have also to see that certain regulations are carried out by the fishers with regard to their name and number being properly painted on each boat, for identification in case of need on disputes or quarrels with the French fishermen. Whether owing to this or to the memory of traditions not yet forgotten, there is sometimes a kind of *malaise* in the demeanour of the fishers towards the coast-guardsmen, and always a certain gravity and reticence in their intercourse. Almost every fisher village has its own little harbour in miniature, situated of course in the most sheltered situation, and if possible so that even at low tide the water should be deep enough to float their boats as far as that is consistent with their safety on a stormy winter's night. As evening approaches first one long slender fellow and then another will appear, either from the houses, or the sunny grassy corner where he has been lounging with his pipe : they make their way down to the boats, which they prepare for the night's work with great care and deli-

boration,—three men and two boys being the general complement to each boat. The particular colony described claims, as has been said, to be of pure Danish blood, and the men are generally tall and gracefully formed, the head high and long, the forehead prominent over the eyes but receding above, the nose generally aquiline, well cut, and strongly marked, a long thigh, high instep, small foot and ankle, and a remarkably free and elastic step. They have generally clear swarthy complexions, bushy whiskers, and mostly dark hair. Their costume is picturesque enough, consisting of dark blue knitted or woven shirt and trowsers, and a scarlet woollen cap, sugar-loaf shaped, and hanging down like a forage-cap. Some of the fishers are really fine specimens of masculine beauty, and the girls are often very handsome, with a proud eye and free and stately gait. As women, they retain their good features and comely looks; but in that class of life, where there is some toil and much exposure to the weather, the delicacy of female beauty is of a very fleeting character. First one boat and then another leaves the little port, and soon the sea is speckled over with them; the women almost invariably gathering in a group on the pier-wall to watch the men set out on their daily work, which is always one of incessant exertion and considerable peril. "It's a parlous life," said one fisher-wife; "if it cooms a coarse nicht, an' they're a'oot, we canna bide in oor beds, we just a' gang doon to the pier-head an' hide there each wife till she has gotten her ain mon hame again." In religion these people are of a melancholy turn, and, to a certain degree, fatalists. For this reason, though the Presbyterian church is not unsuited to them, they prefer those sects which profess a more pronounced Calvinism, such as the United Presbyterians or particular Baptists, &c. A gentleman expressed his intention of accompanying the men in their boat next day. "If the Lord will," rejoined a fisher-wife austerity; and another could find no better comfort to offer to a poor young fellow suffering severely from ague than this, "The old must die, but the young *may*." The remark was made with such significant emphasis that it really sounded like a threat. As a rule, the men are more chaste in their lives, and less gross as regards animal gratifications, than the Lowlander of Saxon stock; they are disposed to excessive exertion of a spasmodic kind, to be followed by an interval of entire laziness; they are capable of an almost ascetic self-denial, but are apt to indemnify themselves by an occasional revel. Many of them are teetotallers six days out of the seven, and even when they are most busy in the herring-fishery, they often take with them no other drink than cold tea; but on the Saturday night these self-imposed rules are altogether in abeyance, and they make merry accordingly. Whisky affects their heads more easily than it disturbs their stomachs; they get sentimental, gay, quarrelsome, sing or fight, as the mood takes them; but the next morning they may all be seen washed and shaved, attired in the Sabbath suit of the Scottish peasant, i.e. black broadcloth from head to foot, lounging up to the church or chapel which they patronize. "I've little to do either with bringing the fishers into the

world or helping them out of it," said an able and intelligent medical man. "It's often a mere form my going down, the women are strong, and after childbirth they are about again in three or four days. The men mostly die of old age, except those that die by drowning. The sea-air keeps off fevers and other epidemics. They hardly ever have rheumatism, which is rather curious. Sometimes an odd case of overdrinking comes into my hands, but very rarely." Some of them speak two distinct dialects—the Lowland Scotch with their neighbours, in which, as usual, all words ending in *l* lose the final letter, and the consonants are left out in the middle of words; the other is perfectly good English, but the accent is something like that of a Highlander, or the brogue of an Irishman. This they use with strangers. They change from one to the other according to the person they address, but do not mix the two together. The boys mostly follow the calling of their fathers. If they emigrate, it is commonly to the United States, towards which the poorer class in Scotland turn as the middle classes look towards India; but, like the Irish, they are more prone to return than the English or German emigrant. "I wearied to come back, so that I may die among my own people by the shore," said an old man who had been knocking about on the other side of the world for thirty years as whaler, settler, gold-digger, &c. Occasionally, but not often, a fisher will marry a girl from the inland villages. This is more rare with the Newhaven men than any of the other colonies. This is looked on by her friends as a kind of virtual separation and a great change, but by no means for the worse. The life is an anxious one, hard and rough in some of its features, and few women not early inured to it can endure it. The wife, after seeing that her husband has on a dry suit, smothers him with clothes in his box-bed, goes up with a heavy creel of fish on her back to the nearest town or railway-station, and there makes her own market. She often sets and superintends the salmon-nets with the aid of one or two of the children, or helps to mend the fishing gear in winter. More than once it has been said that the fishers' wives have been up to the waist in the surf tugging at the ropes with their muscular arms, and bringing the boats to land by main strength when the men have by any casualty been exhausted and in need of assistance. On the other hand these men, in a good herring season, will often make from 80*l.* to 100*l.* The wife has always a servant of her own. She holds the purse and is treated with immense deference by her husband, who is, in fact, in considerable subjection, and submits to be dressed, rebuked, and advised by his wife. "The hoose is aye best guidest and the purse is aye largest when the wife rules ane and haud's tither," said a fishwife, boldly. The shy and respectful manner of these brave and hardy fellows not only with their own women, but with all women, is curious but certainly creditable;—the Irish and the Highlanders exhibit the same peculiarity, and the women are perfectly aware of it and act accordingly: "I remember an innkeeper in Ayrshire telling me that he always waited on the farmers himself, but the wife and the daughters attended to the fishers, "When the farmers are

merry they no ken hoo to guide themselves wi' woman folk, they're ower muckle ceevil, or they're no ceevil eneugh ; and when the fishers are fou they canna guide themselves wi' men." This is very apparent on a Saturday night at any of the little inns on the coast, frequented by fishers, when the men are in a humour for a spree. From one to two dozen of them lounge in and seat themselves in the taproom, which is especially consecrated to their use, and the calls for whisky are very brisk. For a time all goes quietly. There is plenty of music, the songs are generally of a sentimental kind, and often contain as many as fourteen or fifteen verses; indeed, the length of them is only exceeded by the strength of voice and lung of those who sing them,—the upper notes in particular are prolonged and sustained in a fashion almost trying to hear. "*Annie Laurie*," and "*Ye Banks and Braes*," are especial favourites, and never fail to bring down thunders of applause ; this is indicated by beating the tables with their hands, jingling their glasses, and stamping on the wooden floor with their nailed boots. If one man tires another takes up the song. "*The Earl of Huntingtower*," and a ballad called "*The Pirate of the Isles*," I have heard sung, as the Ephesians sang of Diana, "for the space of several hours." One ballad pleased my ear ; it is a wild and melancholy air set in a minor key,—"*The Plaidie that the Winds blew awa'*." The burden of the song is the unhappy fate of a young girl who had loved a false laddie too well, and trusted him too far, and when in shame and in sorrow she repaired to the trysting-tree on the bleak moor, and went in vain, she drew her hood over her head, sat down, and there died. Her body was found in the drift whon the winter's snow melted ; but her honour and her life "had gone wi' the plaidie that the winds blew awa'!" At the expiration of a couple of hours signs of uproar begin to be heard, the perpetual jingling of the bell indicates frequent supplies of whisky, a dozen men are roaring out a dozen different songs, in different keys, with great steadfastness and force ; then there are shouts, blows, smashing of glass. "*I'll fecht ye.*" (*Woman's voice*)—"Saundie, ye'll no fight here." "*We're ganging oot.*" "*Ye'll no gang till ye've paid the aughteenpence.*" Then a fearful scrimmage, and the two combatants tugh out on to the road, followed by half-a-dozen of the least sober. The mistress of the house, or the daughter or servant-girl (the master has retired to his bed, and sleeps the sleep of the just), darts forward fearlessly to "*steek*" the door after them, and as she does so, there are long arms thrust forward to protect her from the weight and crush of those who are pressing on from behind. "*Thank ye, Maggie, my lass—door's steeked.*" And on this announcement the rest retire like sheep back to the tap, as men convinced that further efforts are useless. As soon as they have settled down to their pipes, glass, and song again, Maggie quietly unbars the door, and those outside who have cooled their blood by a short fight re-enter with a somewhat subdued air. Some years ago it was not uncommon for the gathering to include half-a-dozen of the crew of a French fishing-boat, and the "*Marseillaise*" and "*Patriot pour la Syrie*" mingled with "*Ye Banks and Braes*."

understood what his neighbour said or sung ; but they were cordial all the same. However, recent regulations as to the fishing boundaries of the two nations and the mode of settling disputes have, it is alleged, caused some little jealousy and unpleasant feeling, and possibly owing to this the French boats rarely approach the coast with any intention of going ashore. One October night, many years ago, I was smoking my pipe along the road outside one of these little inns, and listening with some amusement to the turmoil within. It wanted only about an hour to closing time, but it was clear moonlight, and from where I stood I could see the dim outline of petticoats on the dark side of the road, and soon ascertained that they were fishers' wives come to re-conduct their husbands home. With the wise intuition of their sex they did not court certain defeat by entering the house, or proclaiming their presence, but continued without, discussing their home affairs with the calm tone of decision appropriate to those who rule.

Diminutive women are notoriously the most enterprising and courageous, and at last the smallest among them went to the door, and demanded, " Is Saundie frae the shore here ? " A shrill voice re-echoed the call, " Saundie frae the shore, ane wants ye."

" I'll nae gang."

" Gang oot and speak till her, Saundie, or she'll mak' your hoose het for ye."

Saundie went out, violently impelled from behind by a friendly shove —a fisher, standing six feet and more in his stockings. Then followed a little conjugal dispute. At first he bade her " gang hame," and tried to elude her grasp ; she threatened a very little and coaxed a good deal, and there were evident signs of giving way on the part of Saundie. At length she prevailed, and led away her giant in triumph, passing the other women in silence, as though feeling a compassion for their want of enterprise and administrative power. He stood still and looked back like Lot's wife, and more than once, as the renewed bursts of revelry struck on his ear, he made a desperate effort to escape, but she clung to him tenaciously : " Dinna cast your een back, Saundie, or ye'll no win hame wi' me the nicht," I heard her say, and then they vanished altogether in the darkness down to the shore.

With the harvest season come the ruspens, or, as the Scotch call them, shearers, from the sister island, and scores of Irishmen are seen on the high roads, haunting the cheap lodging-houses, or sleeping in the barns in gangs when they get work with the farmhands. According to anthropologists there are three kinds of Celts, the dolichocephalous and the brachycephalous—two dominant types, chiefly met with in the North and West Highlands—and a third, of a less prepossessing kind, to be met with everywhere, but mostly in the west of Ireland. Every one will recognize the portrait. Stature low; long, low and broad head; black coarse hair; small dark or grey eyes, with fiery lustre; receding forehead, lower part of the face prominent, broad short nose, and short bent legs;

fierce and cunning in temper, fond of hoarding money, very industrious when clear gain is before them, otherwise lazy and indisposed for work. Of this type the Irish harvesters principally consist. As may be supposed the severity with which the Sabbath is observed is a severe trial of temper to these men, who live literally from hand to mouth, and are, in the sight of the Scotch, little more than wandering and benighted Papists. In the inland counties at this season a little roadside inn is sometimes literally besieged by them on a Sunday morning. They charter a truck in the Government train, in gangs of thirty or forty, and make their way immediately to the nearest public-house, many of them already intoxicated; for the worst of whisky is that, unlike beer, it can be bottled up over-night. As soon as they descry the desired haven they make a dead stop, and it is curious to see their amazement and incredulity when they find the door barred and bolted against them and all refreshment ruthlessly refused. They consult together and knock loudly. The landlord, warned by experience, vouchsafes no reply and keeps out of sight. They coax and blarney, they swear and blaspheme, to no effect; and to see the light in their small fierce eyes, and the working of their mouths, it is evident that their patience is failing fast. If they only knew, perhaps a quiet application at the back door might procure them a loaf of bread and a drink of beer; for the Scotch are not inhospitable, only they like to be respectable, especially on the Sabbath. But this the Irish do not know; and after some time those who are sober become convinced of the hopelessness of their efforts, so they take up their bundles and reaping-hooks and toil along the lane, after cursing the people, the religion, the Sabbath, and in particular the landlord, but leaving six or eight of the most drunken behind them. These take up their station at the door, on which they commence a monotonous battering and kicking. They might indeed break in at the window, but that course never seems to occur to their confused senses; the door, the open door, is to them the symbol of the public-house, and at it first one and then another continues to pound unavailingly. The rest sit down on the ground and place the house in a state of siege. From time to time they quarrel and fight, but as they are hardly able to stand up, that amusement does not last long. Fortunately they treat their sickles as sacred instruments, and always lay them carefully aside before they engage in combat, whatever may be their provocation. "It's *nae* inside o' me to quarrel with any man living or dead, and I'll fight any man that will tell me it is," one observes emphatically. "By St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin it's an accursed country," replies his companion. "Not like *ould* Ireland anyhow." (Wangs.) A third rises to depart, the two others accompany him for a few yards—they all embrace. "I love ye, Pether," says one, "and I'll never leave you nor forsake ye." They go along the lane for a few hundred yards; it ends by their all coming back again and encamping as before.

But all confusion, uproar, and revelry culminate at one period, and when Celt meets Celt then comes the tug of war. During the halting,

fishing there are a large number of supplementary hands employed : landsmen, or dalesmen as they are called, mostly in fact Highlanders, tall powerful fellows representing the other types of the Celt. These men are well paid, and of course assist in the celebration of the close of the herring-fishing, which is not a dry-lipped season. It generally occurs in the early part of September, exactly when the harvest is begun and the Irish most abound. Fisher, Dalesman, Irishman, and Highlander meet at the fishers' inn. It is a harvest-home, a Yorkshire "mell," a sailors' spree, a border fight, and an Irish wake combined. Some years ago a friend of mine assisted by accident, in the character of an unnoticed spectator, at one of these gatherings. His journal ran as follows :—

" Early on in the evening.—A gigantic Highlander is thrown out of the door by the united force of five men. Mad drunk and very angry, he retires to his lair, and the door is 'steeked.' "

" 8 p.m.—The Highlander has effected an entrance, the door having been left ajar in an unguarded manner. The constable has been sent for, but of course was not to be found—in the vernacular, 'he's awa.' Dreadful uproar. Highlander has possessed himself of a domestic implement—to wit, the fire-shovel—and has threatened to brain every one round. The women are still at the helm of government, and occasionally scream so loudly as to frighten every male present; but they never lose their courage and presence of mind, though one privately confessed to me that she 'wearied for the fishers' coming, as the Heeghlander was a dark man and the Irish had gotten their hooks with them.'

" 8.30 p.m.—The Highlander has been again cast forth, shovel in hand. The Irish within execute a war-dance. Highlander patrols before the house, shouldering his weapon and uttering many imprecations. The whole village population has turned out to look at him, and he is contemplated in silent awe and at a respectful distance. His wife or daughter has appeared, and vainly tries to coax him home. Failing, she curses the spectators well, both in good Gaelic and broad Scotch.

" 9 p.m.—A dozen and more fishers have arrived, and confidence is restored. The Highlander has slunk in with them, but is quiet and disposed for sentiment. He still hugs his shovel. The women are buoyant and radiant.

" 10 p.m.—A wild Dalesman has gone mad, and after running all over the house, fell down, and has been laid on a bench to recover. An Irishman has been led out wounded and weeping. Six other Irish stand round him in pitying sympathy ; they have washed his face, and I think kissed him. He still continues to proclaim that he's 'a dead man an' kilt intirely.' They have now got him on his legs, and his grief seems to be subsiding.

" Closing time comes.—They all turn out, though unwillingly ; but the women give decisive orders, and no rest till they are obeyed. Every one challenges every one else to fight on the road. All terminates in a national dance of reel, hornpipe, and Irish jig combined, each man whistling his own tune.

"'It's a vera beastly sight to see the men fecht,' said a handsome stately fishwife ; 'but it's only the Heeglanders and Irish that do sic an thing,' she added, with complacent pride ; 'it's no our ain fishers.'

"A week later.—I have seen my friend the Highlander more or less drunk from morn till night, and night till morning, now seven days running. Many small shops in Scotland sell whisky, and what he cannot get at the inn he procures from the shops. He has not slept or had his clothes off his back all the time, and the strings and buttons by which they are held together begin to fail conspicuously. 'He'll be having a touch of the horrors,' said one man to the other. 'No just yet,' was the reply. 'He has been three times in at the flesher's the day for a pund of chops, and carried them awa' in his haund, and he's just cookit them and eaten them a'. He'll no dee whiles that he can eat.'"

C o n t e n t s .

DEEP snows of death have caught my failing feet,
Drowsy I sink—ah, let me slumber soon !
Have I not walk'd among the meadow-sweet,
And felt my own heart glorious as June,
And liv'd my fill ? Gay, gay the fancies came,
I could draw mirth from silence or dull books,
When this faint life that falters through my frame,
Throbb'd music, like the beating pulse of brooks.
And when dear faces from my sight had vanish'd,
Still, as the Blind you pity may see most,
Fair night fetch'd bliss that darker daytime banish'd,
And in some happy dream I found my lost.
I shall not sleep such sleep, and dream anew,
For better than my dream is coming true.

M. B.

Punishment in the Days of Old.

GREAT as we think ourselves in science, ingenious device, and huge construction, it must after all be admitted that we fall very far short of our progenitors, and that not merely in matters of no moment, but in almost all great and noble things, from the building of a church or the forging of a stout blade up to a good hard-hitting prize fight. The very best of our painters would rejoice to hold a taper to Raphael or Rubens; but whether they would be altogether worthy of the office is quite another thing. Our poets would sing very small indeed beside Danto or Chaucer; though we have not the slightest doubt that one or two of them could earn a five shilling fine for "brawling" as well as, if not better than the latter, or get up a seditious riot as cleverly as the former. Few of our architects, we suspect, could pass the ordeal applied to freemasons in those days. Even Mr. Bennet himself would be compelled to hide his diminished head in presence of the horologer who constructed the clock that ornamented the dome of Dantzic. The bonnets and chignons of 1868 are very fair in their way, but they are the merest trifles in comparison with the superb head-dresses of the fourteenth century, when it was usual to enlarge the city gates to admit the tower of coils that rose story on story, over every pretty face. The heaviest swell among us would cut a remarkably poor figure beside a Gaveston, a Courtney, a Bonnivet, or a Bussy d'Amboize; or rather, any of these gallants would cut a very poor figure in him, for assuredly they would either disdain to recognize his existence as "a man and a brother," or drill a few holes in his body for presuming to aspire to their fellowship in such unworthy garb. And even that battle of battles which poets sang, and bishops, it is whispered, consecrated with their presence,—the combat between Sayers and Heenan,—was as a satyr to Hyperion contrasted with the tournament in splendour, in gallantry, and especially in black eyes and bloody noses. But if we were called on to name anything in particular in which a great falling off from the past is visible we should certainly designate the gibbet as one of the little matters in which we have most degenerated from the perfection of our sires.

It is only after tedious investigation and with much reluctance, that we are brought to hang up an occasional scoundrel; and we are glad of any excuse that may enable us to dispense with the last disgusting act of the tragedy. But our ancestors were not so squeamish. In their view axe and cord were specifics for every disorder that could affect the body politic, and they applied both unrelentingly. And we are even more

unworthy of our sires in the matter of secondary inflictions. Penal servitude and transportation may be excellent things in their way ; but our fine old English gentlemen and their foreign contemporaries would have scoffed at such effeminate devices. Did any one among these dangerous classes exhibit a taste for illegal drilling, or handling edged tools—sword or pen—in a dangerous way, or taking a sly aim from behind a wall—they seldom bothered themselves with mere humdrum precautionary measures, but proceeded at once to place a restraint on his propensities by that particular form of ventilation which his case suggested.

There were few things in those good old days that might not be rendered criminal according to the temper of the particular time and tyrant. Did a court physician fail to cure, they hung him up or cut him down as happened to be most convenient ; nor was he much better off when the utmost success attended his efforts. Cottier, the physician of Louis XI., stoned for the skill with which he had prolonged the hated life of his master, with a fine of 50,000 crowns—equal to as many pounds of our money. And doubtless he considered himself not all unlucky to escape so easily, for the two Augustine monks who undertook the cure of Charles the Mad, when every sensible practitioner shrank from the task, were beheaded and quartered on the next relapse of their patient.

And the merchant of “ lang syne ” was no better off than the surgeon. An archbishop of Cologne once built a strong castle at the intersection of four roads, and presented it, with his blessing, to a poor relation who had been in the army. When the soldier desired to be informed how he was to maintain his garrison, since the excellent prelate had omitted to assign him a salary, the latter replied very significantly by pointing out the situation of the fortress, and the poor relation made such good use of the hint that he died a millionaire. Indeed, it was not a remarkable thing in those days for gentlemen to break up every road except that one which led immediately under their battlements, in order to facilitate their pillage of the trader. Sometimes when the neighbouring princes found themselves in difficulties they made war on the rich burghers, especially of Flanders, robbing and ravaging until the merchants came to terms and bought them off, while those who had no such prey handy betook them to what was termed “ borrowing ”—a transaction the nature of which is very neatly illustrated by the following anecdotes :—The good people of Ghent, having once upon a time lent our Edward III. 200,000 crowns, ventured several years after to request payment—a proceeding so preposterously absurd that it drew roars of laughter from the Lords of the Council to whom the deputies applied. Nor was this by any means harsh treatment. The lively Duke of Orleans having, in a fit of religious fervour, vowed to pay his debts called his creditors together by sound of trumpet. He really was sincere, and made what he considered ample arrangements, but he reckoned without his host. The crowd, 800 and upwards, that presented themselves at the appointed time horrified him, and, despairing

of being able to satisfy them otherwise, he flogged a dozen or so by way of example, and dismissed the rest with hideous threats as to what would befall should they still persist in teasing him with their paltry bills. And Charles the Vile, of Navarre, squared an account in a similar way. Henry of Transtamar having expelled his brother, Peter the Cruel, the latter was returning to his dominions escorted by the Black Prince and 30,000 men. As Charles held the passes of the Pyrenees both brothers applied to him—the one offering a couple of towns for free passage, and the other a large sum that the defiles might be barred. The offers were equally tempting, and Charles made up his mind to earn them both. He took the money and then excused himself from obstructing the march of the invaders by hiring one Oliver de Mauny to waylay him and clap him in prison. When the Black Prince had passed the King of Navarre demanded his release. But de Mauny had profited too well by his employer's example to keep strictly to his bargain. He pocketed his hire, and then affecting to consider the king as a true prisoner of war, refused to part with him except on the customary terms—a large ransom. Most people would have given way to anger under such barefaced extortion, but not so Charles, who, thoroughly appreciating such a pretty piece of perfidy even when exercised on himself, chuckled over it with the greatest relish, and, in short, agreed at once to his very good friend's demand. The latter, perfectly satisfied with himself and everybody else, consented to accompany the Vile one to Tudela in order to receive his pay, which he did directly he entered the town—only it was on the scaffold and from the hands of the hangman. Of course it required some little dexterity to induce close-fisted people to part with their cash on such terms; but the kings and princes of the Middle Ages were always equal to the occasion, and the Tudors and Plantagenets brilliantly so. Everybody knows how King John coaxed a loan from the Hebrew, and such persuasives as a few weeks' lodging in the pleasant domicile called "Little Ease," or a campaign as a common soldier against the wild borderers, were applied with success to an obstinate banker by the last Royal Harry. It need scarcely be said that the example of the king was never lost upon the courtier. And thus—so far as his relations with the powerful extended—the wealthy plebeian was in a perpetual dilemma. It was dangerous to lend and equally so to withhold. For when a creditor became too importunate a judicious application of whip, knife, or noose, abated the nuisance; while the capitalist who refused to do a little bill ran the risk of having himself and his business suspended together.

But violence was then the universal remedy. Nothing could mitigate the horrors of famine or pestilence like a massacre of the Jews and lepers; and it was the easiest thing in the world to put down a popular tumult by stringing to the trees, or still more convenient sign-posts, as many of the mob as authority could contrive to lay hands on. Here are a couple of instances, taken almost at random out of ten thousand. The Crusaders brought the leprosy home from the East, and uncleanly habits, bad food,

and defective sanitary arrangements rendered it for a period a really formidable epidemic, while its loathsome nature invested it with exceeding terror. The lepers were everywhere immured in hospitals, which were erected and maintained by charity. Between 1814 and 1821 a series of famines and pestilences destroyed vast multitudes, probably a third of the whole population of Europe. In the last of those years startling rumours were heard in all directions. It was told that the Spanish Moors had determined to exterminate the Christians from the face of the earth ; that they had employed the Jews to effect their purpose ; that the Jews, again, had deputed the task to the lepers, and that these miserable beings had agreed to carry out the strange design by infecting all the healthy round them with their own hideous malady. It was further stated that the lepers had actually deliberated the matter in four grand convocations, attended by deputies from every lazarus-house in Europe, with the exception of two in England—an exception which gave the story a greater seeming of reality ; and that they had finally decided to effect their object by poisoning all the springs, and by the still more dreaded means of magic spells. The story was exactly suited to the era, and was everywhere greedily credited, especially in France, whose king and people took the lead in punishing the assumed criminals. That country was soon in one of its numerous tiger fits—and, it need scarcely be added, the scene of unutterable horrors. Here, the lazarus-houses and their inmates were burnt together ; there, the lepers were pushed at the point of the lance into the nearest river ; in other quarters, again, they were stoned to death, or hunted down, and slaughtered like wolves ; while the few survivors endeavoured, too often in vain, to shelter their wretchedness among the woods and rocks. Occasionally, indeed, affection rose stronger than disgust and terror, and snatched the victim from destruction, or sought to mitigate his fate by sharing it with him. But as for the Jews, they experienced no mercy whatever. Such of them as escaped instant massacre were committed to prison and subjected to the torture. Their shrieks of agony rang from every dungeon ; and, when these were stilled, a thousand fires blazed to devour them—180, including male and female, infant and grandsire, perishing in a single one at Toulouse. It was not until the commencement of another reign that these atrocities ceased ; and then "acts of grace" were put forth, which—admitting the reality of the conspiracy and the justice of the punishment inflicted—advised that the revenues of the lazarus-houses might be restored ; that such of the unfortunate lepers as had escaped, and who were sternly prohibited from following any occupation by which they could maintain themselves, might be mercifully permitted to live on by the help of charity, that is, supposing charity not to have been killed off so far as they were concerned by the horrible accusation ; and that the Jews might be allowed to leave their prisons between sunrise and sunset, in order to raise the money by which the great favour of exile was to be bought. Nor did the occasional rioter fare very much better than Jew or leper. In the reign of Henry III. the Londoners happened to quarrel with the people of Westminster at a

wrestling match. The former grew riotous, broke a good many heads, and pulled down several houses—much to the amusement of nobility and knighthood, which happened, in considerable force, to be looking on. But the rioters having foolishly extended the latter portion of their performance to some tenements belonging to the Abbot of Westminster, the aspect of things underwent a great change in the view of the lordly proprietors. The latter instantly mounted and charged, capturing several dozens of the mob, and dispersing the rest. The ringleaders were hanged at once, without form or process, and the remainder of the captives dismissed, with their feet chopped off.

The thousands who died for witchcraft show how dangerous it was to be ugly or poor in the “glorious days of old ;” and, as hundreds of instances attest, it was almost as fatal to be conspicuous for wealth, and especially for beauty. Indeed, from the days of Elgiva to those of Mary Stuart, a fair lady is scarcely ever mentioned by the Chroniclers except as the subject of a tragedy. Nor are we without recorded instances of gentlemen who were ruined solely by their good looks. It was not, indeed, any unwomanly repugnance to his handsome face that induced Queen Matilda to consign the Saxon Brihtric to perpetual imprisonment; though those who remember the rather eccentric style of wooing—a good thrashing and a roll through a mud puddle—which finally fixed her affections on the Conqueror, might be inclined to think otherwise. But, exceptional as she showed herself to William, it is quite certain that Matilda was even more than sufficiently appreciative of personal graces in the case of Brihtric, since she was so taken with that mediæval exquisite, when ambassador at her father’s court, that she actually offered him her hand. And it was to punish his refusal that, years after, the unforgiving queen begged the Saxon from her husband as her share of the English spoil.

But the Jew aside, there was nobody so liable to forfeit life or limb, three or four hundred years ago, as the immediate servant of the Crown. Disobedient, he was pretty sure to meet death by the award of his master; while, if he distinguished himself by too strict adherence to orders, he was generally despatched out of the world by that master’s successor. Indeed, in nearly every case during those much-lauded times, the accession of a new monarch, or the weakness of a reigning one, was the signal for an onslaught on all who had rendered themselves obnoxious in regal service, especially by accumulating riches. Every court in Europe had its Calderons and Straffords—its Empsons and Giacs—its long succession of ministers and minions—who, as a rule, atoned with life for too faithful service. It must be allowed that the greedy and the vindictive were generally justified in bringing their victims to the scaffold by their abundant crime. But this was not invariably the case. Now and then an upright minister, and even a favourite with some little principle, did make his appearance at Court. Not that the innocence of such a one availed him much when his evil day arrived, except to precipitate his doom and aggravate his sufferings. For ruin and torture were rendered much more certain and acute by the charges of witchcraft and heresy which were

usually resorted to in lack of more substantial matter of accusation. So, among a host of others, found Euguerrand de Marigni, Minister of Finance to Philip the Fair. Having been rash enough to give the lie to Charles of Valois, the brother of his sovereign, in return for a similar compliment, he paid the penalty of his indiscretion at the earliest opportunity—the death of his master. That event made Charles regent of France, and his very first act was the imprisonment of his enemy. The prince then went to work like a railway committee against an unpopular contractor or chairman, with the trifling difference that he tortured the clerks instead of the accounts, in order to convict the man he hated of embezzlement. Finding that particular method of distorting figures useless, it was next determined to accuse the fallen statesman of sorcery, and the success of this plan was all that Charles could have desired. It was announced that de Marigni's wife and sister, acting under his direction, had employed one of the professors of diablerie that then swarmed in all directions, to aid them in destroying the whole royal race. We need not pause to investigate the particular species of incantation by which the de Marignis and their associates were accused of intending to effect their purpose, since, whichever way the charge ran, it enabled the regent to effect his. The magician, assured of death in any case, hanged himself to escape the atrocious torture which awaited him, while his wife and servant were burnt alive. De Marigni's wife and sister were sentenced to be immured for life, and the hapless courtier himself, in spite of his noble birth, which—as the law then ran—ought to have secured him from such ignominy, was not only hanged, but, by a singular fortune, his remains were afterwards fastened to the gibbet which himself had caused to be erected shortly before at Montfaucon, for the exposure of executed felons. Four of his successors in office underwent the same fate, and for very similar reasons, during the next two centuries—the last of them, Semblancq, going to the gallows in 1522, as the proxy of the mother of Francis I., who had made the unfortunate intendant of finance her instrument in ruining an army, in order to gratify the grudge she bore its general, Lautrec. And judicial mortality was even more rife among chancellors, constables, chamberlains, and other great officers of state. Indeed, no mediæval statesman was at all sure of dying quietly in his bed, unless he happened to be a dignitary of the Church. In that case, indeed, he was usually safe. Even Louis XI., much as he hated Cardinal Balne, shrank from putting him to death. And, in time, this impunity of the clergy came to be so well understood, that every prudent minister took care to avail himself of it, by purchasing a cardinal's hat, or, at the very least, a bishopric.

Occasionally there were rulers who delighted to place people in such ticklish positions that any course of action might be interpreted into treason. Our own Elizabeth had some knowledge of this particular branch of "kingcraft." But its supreme master—not even excepting the author of the celebrated *ambiguité*, "Spare not to kill the King is well,"—was Louis XI. Certain citizens of Arras having requested his per-

mission to visit the Court of Burgundy on business, Louis told them in person that he considered them quite capable of deciding that small matter without troubling him. Taking the King's reply for assent, they set out—twenty-three in number—on their journey; but before they had traversed a league they were stopped, brought back, and decapitated by that gloomy official, Tristam l'Hermite. One of the victims had not long before been appointed a counsellor of the Parliament of Paris by Louis, and now the ferocious tyrant caused the severed head to be invested with the usual cap of office, and deposited in its proper place among the members of that legal body, when assembled in their hall. Again and again did the powerful of those ages, which respected the text, "Touch not mine anointed," too profoundly to bring the crowned felon himself to the scaffold, execute him by substitute, in the persons of such of his servants as happened to fall the first into their hands. The Count of Harcourt and three other gentlemen were beheaded by John, King of France, in 1355, and twenty-two years later two others of equal rank by his successor Charles, in punishment of a few of the numerous crimes perpetrated by their master, that same Charles the Vile, one specimen of whose handiwork we have already related. But the reprobate himself did not finally escape. His death was not indeed a judicial one, but it was fully as terrible. Being accustomed, in his later years, to sleep in night-clothes that had been steeped in spirits of wine, these at last took fire—it was whispered that his servants deliberately ignited them—and thus the monster perished in some such agony as it had delighted him to inflict.

"It was, however, on their insurgents that the powers of the Middle Ages delighted to lavish their penalties. The people of Dinant having quarrelled with their lord, Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, the leading demagogues took a course very common in those days to render the breach irreparable. They hanged his messengers, executed himself in effigy over their walls, and indulged in the coarsest reflections on the duchess. And they suffered fearfully. Unable to resist the force which the rage of the offended prince gathered instantly against them, they surrendered at discretion; but they might as well have fought it out to the last. The duke sacked the city for three days, then set it on fire, and when the blaze streamed highest had 800 of the citizens pinioned in couples, back to back, and thrown into the Meuse. The remainder he sold as slaves, and, with vengeance still unsated, set his workmen in crowds to pull down the blackened ruins, and thus efface every vestige of the hated town. But this evil deed was outdone at Nesle by his successor, Charles le Temeraire. Revenging the perfidy of their prince on the hapless people he slew garrison and inhabitants alike, allowing none to escape but a few archers whose hands he had previously lopped off at the wrists. When the fierce duke rode into the reddest scene of slaughter—the principal church—and saw the heaps of slain that lumbered the floor, he creased himself with grateful satisfaction saying, "Qu'il voyait mouet belle chose, et qu'il avoit avec lui mouet bons bouchers." But even poetic justice had reason to be satisfied with the fate of this butcher prince. He

who would not hear another's cry for mercy encountered a foe on the lost field of Nanci who could not hear his own ; he fell by the hand of Claude of Beaumont, who was deaf, and to whom, therefore, his offer of surrender was addressed in vain. Our own favourite heroes are by no means free from the same dark reproach. The Black Prince punished the treachery of the Bishop of Limoges by sparing the offender and massacring the innocent people, with the honourable exception of a few knights whose gallant resistance had won his admiration. And Henry V. inflicted a similar punishment on the inhabitants of Meaux for what appears to us a very inadequate offence. As soon as the English army appeared before their walls the men of Meaux placed an ass on their ramparts, and beating it until it brayed, jeeringly invited the English, whose attention had been attracted by the odd spectacle, to come and rescue their king who, as they asserted, was crying out for help. What a period it must have been when a hero could be stimulated to massacre by such miserable buffoonery ! Yet, after all, massacre, however indiscriminate, was by no means the worst thing that could befall rebels. The Count of Evreux, who ruled Normandy during the minority of Duke Richard, having detected a conspiracy which the peasants had organised against the ruling classes, arrested all the ringleaders, and, without bringing them to trial, first punished them according to his own cruel pleasure, and then gave his subordinates full licence to add to his sentence whatever their evil fancy could suggest. Some of the wretches were blinded, their hands cut off, or their sinews seared with hot irons ; others again were impaled, placed at slow fires, or submitted to shower-baths of molten lead. The few who survived this diabolical treatment were paraded through the villages as objects of terror and then sent home. And this excellent count was at least equalled by Charles VI. of France. In revenge for a Hyde Park sort of demonstration of the good citizens of Paris in 1381, that king, besides fining and taxing to an unlimited extent, and imprisoning whomsoever he pleased, hanged many, drowned more, and cutting off the right arms of some hundreds, suspended the severed limbs from the necks of their owners as, to use his own words, "an eternal badge of infamy." Nor was the conduct of these rulers by any means exceptional. Through every country in Europe mutilation was then the lot of those prominent insurgents and rioters who happened to escape the gallows. It was therefore perpetually in action, for the revolts of the lower classes were as ceaseless as their provocation, and the latter was everlasting. Crushed, degraded, and demoralized as they were, the serfs still retained some portion of manly feeling, and whenever they could they rose to assert it. In spite of their iron p^{anoply}, their trained retainers, and their moated walls, the nobles were frequently surprised, and for a time the infuriated peasantry carried all before them, robbing, murdering, and perpetrating every other horror ; until—compact, and strong, and mad for vengeance—down came the cavaliers. When the long lance and the heavy sword were tired, and the arm was weary with smiting, then, and not till then, was the executioner called in. Shoals of

the miserable insurgents were tied up to the trees ; and still greater multitudes dismissed fearfully disfigured, to crowd the highways with beggars, and to be everywhere a warning, but, alas ! a fruitless one, against future revolt. For " Serfs ye were, serfs ye are, and bondmen ye shall remain"—*Rustici quidem fuistis et estis, et in bondagio permanebitis*, as Walsingham reports it—was the sentence' that rang after the fugitives, and the conquerors could take no surer means of perpetuating rebellion than by carrying it out.

The mediæval penal code eschewed monotony just as carefully as weakness. Its capital and other corporal punishments might be rather more frequent than modern prejudices approves of, but excellent care was taken to divest them of tedious uniformity. Mr. Justice Tresilian, the very worthy predecessor of Jeffreys, was quite an artist in this species of deadly variety, as the followers of John Ball and Wat Tyler experienced, some of whom he hanged four times over before he allowed them to die. But clever as our English adepts were—and some of them were exceedingly so—we must admit that they competed but poorly with their continental rivals, with whom, in the good old time, death was beyond all question the veritable " king of terrors." Thanks to our novelists, the reading public is pretty well acquainted with the commoner appliances of torture, and we are therefore not under the necessity of enlarging on such fascinating items as the rack, the wheel, the thumbscrew, and the boot. But these were only the everyday forms of punishment. There were always individuals, princes and politicians, especially of the Byzantine empire, who rose superior to such vulgar usages, and with whom " killing by inches " was not a mere figure of speech, but a dread reality. Indeed some of their detestable inventions of cruelty have obtained as wide celebrity as the bull of Phalaris. There was the " chambre à crucer "—a heavy chest, short, shallow, and lined with sharp stones—in which the sufferer was packed, and the lid, heavily weighted, shut down, on him. There were the " bernicles," consisting of a mattress, on which the victim was fastened by the neck with bullock's sinews to keep him from moving, while his legs were passed through a kind of stocks, and crushed between two great logs of wood, on the uppermost of which a man was seated ; the process being repeated on the third day, which, as the old chronicler tells us, " is the cruellest thing that ever was heard of." There were the iron cages of Louis XI., in which some of his victims spent years, and which were so maliciously contrived that every position—standing, sitting, or lying—was equally uncomfortable to the occupant. But, unquestionably, the master contrivances of all these delicate inventions for producing excruciating agony were the " baiser de la vierge " of Baden Baden, and the " iron coffin " of Lissa. In the former the prisoner, blindfold and fastened in a chair, was lowered by a windlass through a well-like shaft, reaching from the top of the castle deep down into the heart of the rock on which it stands, so deep—for the shaft still exists—that the visitor passing beneath can barely discern the glimmering daylight at the top. Here he was immured in a dungeon hewn out of the living stone, and fitted with a door

of the same material a foot thick, so artfully constructed that it was not to be distinguished from the adjoining wall. In this miserable cell, surrounded by darkness that might be felt—silent, helpless, hopeless, like a toad in the centre of its block—he remained until the hour of trial. He was then brought before his judges, who awaited him, masked and solemn, in a larger excavation, called the Hall of Judgment. From thence he was conducted to the torture chamber—a den amply supplied with all the necessary implements—and subjected to its amenities according to the discretion of his judges. This over, the captive was sped through the last act of the tragedy. He was unbuckled from his iron bed, and directed to kiss a bronze statue of the Virgin, that stood at the end of one of the passages leading from the chamber, as the seal of whatever declaration had been wrung from his agony. Wearily he dragged himself along, with tottering limbs and failing strength, until, as he raised his lips to the mild face of the Madonna, a trap-door gave way beneath his tread, and precipitated him, fathoms down, upon a series of delicately-poised wheels—

All horrent with projecting spears—

which his fall set in rapid motion. Nor do we exaggerate in the least, for the fragments of the murderous machinery, stuck thickly over with bits of bone and pieces of dress, still remain at the bottom of the fearful oublie. More awful still was the punishment of the iron coffin, wherein the prisoner saw his dungeon contracting round him day by day and hour by hour, the sides stoaling up and the roof creeping down—slowly, steadily, silently—passionless as fate, and as remorseless—the dread machinery maintaining the calm monotony of its march, through lingering days and nights of horror, until the final collapse crushed him.

But even the worst of these was mildness itself when compared with the infernalities occasionally practised on a few exceptional victims of exasperated power. Regicides were tortured with more than Indian ferocity, until the body was incapable of further suffering. Jornandi, a descendant of the Norman conquerors of Sicily, in requital for rebellion against the Emperor Henry VI., was enthroned naked on a seat of red-hot iron, and crowned with a similar diadem. A noble matron of Constantinople, having refused the hand of her daughter to one of the infamous parasites of the second Theodore Lascares, that ingenuous tyrant caused the obstinate dame to be stripped and enclosed to the neck in a sack along with a number of cats, who were pricked into furious exercise of tooth and talon by a couple of executioners. Another of these worthy rulers, Justinian II., was accustomed to punish his insolvent tributaries by suspending them, head downwards, in the offensive smoke of a fire fed by noxious weeds. And a third, Constans II., having in vain endeavoured to soothe the jealousy excited in his brother Theodosius by consigning him to the priesthood, at length murdered the unfortunate youth in one of the atrocious ways peculiar to the East. But the crime was too horrible for even the Greeks of that blood-stained capital—habituated, to tolerate as they were, to the daily perpetration of similar deeds, and rising indignant, they drove the assassin from his capital. But not into

security. A vengeance far surpassing any they could have inflicted thenceforward shared his exile, nor ever left his side even for an instant until the distant hour of his own murder. Then only did the phantom of his victim cease to present its chalice filled with blood to the murderer's lips, and to appal his ear with the terrible invitation, "Drink, brother, drink! drink, brother, drink!" But we must not linger over that sink of depravity, the Lower Empire, or we shall feel the poisonous influence of its exhalations; like Ducange, for instance, who discusses with too evident relish the various methods devised, under the patronage of the Byzantine rulers, for extinguishing the sight. We merely pause to remark that one of the most used of these imperial punishments, the amputation of the tongue, originated a "miracle"—that of speech without tongues—which edified the orthodox of the fifth century, confounded the Arian persecutors who had recourse to it, and exceedingly bothered the historian Gibbon. That writer, unable to controvert the evidence adduced in favour of the marvel, very characteristically insinuates that he has as good a right to be obstinate in doubt as the Arians. Questionless, he would have exulted had he known that the "miracle" was no miracle at all, but a common occurrence in the East, where the punishment has been practised beyond memory to this extent, the amputation of *half* the organ, and where those who have fortitude enough to encounter the pain and risk attending *total* excision, recover the powers of speech lost by the former operation.

England, we rejoice to write, offers fewer examples of these abominations than any other country, though, we hope, not exactly for the reason assigned by that excellent lawyer, Sir Thomas Smith, who, writing in the reign of Elizabeth, tells us that "it is the nature of the Englishman to abide no torment, and that, therefore, he will confess himself rather to have done anything, yea, to have killed his own father, than to suffer torment." Nevertheless, this old island has witnessed too much evil of the kind. Our kings, certainly, did not go quite so far in defining treason as Dionysius, who included dreams in the catalogue of capital offences, but some of them effected a very close approximation—notably that Achilles, Edward IV., who put one man to death for a jest, and another for a petulant remark. And it is with anything rather than the self-satisfaction of Britons that we peruse that passage of Sir Edward Coke's which explains hanging, drawing, and disengaging on scriptural principles, and justifies them by patriarchal precedent, or certain statutes of "Bluff Harry's," or those pages of our history which tell us how one of our kings placed a family under the scaffold that they might be wetted by their father's blood; how another, and a hero, allowed the gallant Lord Cobham to unite in his death the various penalties decreed against treason and heresy; and how a third permitted the previously unheard-of punishment of boiling alive to be inflicted on the cook of "saintly Fisher."

All this infamous variety of torture and death was at the unlimited disposal of every one of the thousand tyrants whose mad whim was law in

the terrible Middle Ages. And an untimely display of virtue, valour, or self-respect, was far more certain than outrageous villainy to bring their vengeance down. Alain Blanchard was beheaded by Henry V. for his heroic defence of his native city, Rouen ; 400 of the English garrison were tied in couples and drowned in the Sienne for their stubborn resistance at Pontoise ; Albert Bieling ennobled the murderous squabbles of the " Hooks and Codfish " by his conduct when doomed to be buried alive,—sentence having been pronounced, he asked and obtained, not mitigation, but a month's respite to take leave of his family, and returned at the expiration of the period to undergo his fate. One of the Raugrafs of Hardenburgh quarrelled with the abbot of a neighbouring monastery, made him prisoner, set his abbey on fire, and carrying the captive churchman to the battlements of his castle, took good care that he should not avert his eyes from the unpleasant spectacle by building his head into the wall. The monks of Glastonbury having vexed their abbot Toustain by obstinately refusing to learn a new chant—the latter at last added the persuasions of a band of men-at-arms to his own, and these gentlemen soon managed to make the monks change their tune by slaughtering eighteen of them. "Take care of him," said Charles the Mad, nodding towards a knight, who appeared to pass him on the high road with some diminution of respect, and immediately the gentleman was pursued, tied up in a sack, and thrown into the next river. And the same fate, but rather more justly, was inflicted on the Bastard of Bourbon, by Charles the Wise. John Goffredi, who abandoned the office of bishop to earn the title of the " Devil of Arras," performed the following hideous exploit at the instigation of Louis XI. :—The Count of Armagnac, a man of many crimes, sought shelter from the vengeance of his king in the strong castle of Lectour. But the Devil of Arras got in by swearing solemnly to a capitulation. Breaking his oath the next moment, he stabbed the count in the arms of his wife, poisoned the latter, and, to destroy all evidence of his perfidy, exterminated the inhabitants of the district. That same Louis was in the habit of ornamenting the approaches to his castle of Plessis les Tours by long rows of bodies suspended from the trees. Nor was this an exclusively royal pastime. In troublous times almost any petty captain could indulge in it. Outside of Meaux stood, until very recently, the stump of a tree much patronised in the days of long ago by one of those amiable cavaliers called the Bastard of Vaurus. This gentle knight was accustomed to dispose of his prisoners among the branches of this tree, and from one of these same branches he finally dangled himself, by the just sentence of our Henry V. "The Oak of Reformation," too, at Norwich, was similarly and largely used by Roman Catholic rebel and Protestant avengers in the days of Edward VI.

Favourites, brothers, wives, and husbands, were variously destroyed without exciting any great sensation. The Countess Jane of Flanders crowned a life of profligacy and a reign of tyranny by denouncing her own father as an impostor, and putting him to a shameful death after the

infliction of exquisite torture. The Duke of Albany starved his nephew. Joan of Naples had the first of her four husbands smothered between two mattresses, and suffered a similar fate. Louis le Hutin had his queen Margaret strangled with a napkin. But the list is endless, and as we have no desire to compile a mere catalogue of horror, with one more specimen we shall gladly take leave of these enormous perversions of justice.

Francis I. of Brittany was worthy of the era that produced Louis XI., Richard of Gloucester, the Devil of Arras, and Oliver le Dain ; and so was his minister, Arthur de Montaubin. The last was probably the most odiously wicked man of his day ; but that did not prevent him from taking orders, nor from dying quietly an archbishop. This minion quarrelled with Prince Gilles, younger brother of the duke, because the heiress of Dinant had preferred the prince to himself. Incited by his favourite, the duke imprisoned his brother and endeavoured to do him legally to death. False witnesses in plenty were not wanting ; but the case was one of those that now and then take strong hold of the public ; and, besides, Gilles had powerful friends, and, what was much the same thing, Montaubin inveterate enemies ; so no tribunal could be tempted or threatened into pronouncing a capital sentence. The duke then transferred his brother secretly from prison to prison, and thus baffled sympathy until, by the end of the third year, it had pretty nearly subsided. Judging the proper time to have come, the duke instructed the Castellan of Hardovinage, the prince's last gaoler, to put his prisoner to death. That worthy, Olivier de Miel by name, first tried starvation. But unfortunately for the success of this plan, the grated window of the dungeon looked into the castle ditch, where a poor woman gathering sticks was attracted by the prince's groans, and discovered his situation. She did all she could for him without endangering herself—supplied him stealthily and under cover of night with a little coarse bread and water, and brought a priest as poor as herself to administer spiritual comfort through the grating. Astonished after the lapse of many weeks that the prisoner did not die, the gaoler next tried poison, and that too, proving ineffectual, as a last resource he had the prince smothered between two mattresses, and then announced that he had died from apoplexy. The duke was besieging Avranches when informed of his brother's death, and the news drove him at once to his quarters. On his way thither he was arrested by the friar who had acted as the prince's confessor. Laying his hand on the duke's bridle and raising his voice to its loudest pitch, the priest solemnly cited the duke, in the name of the murdered man, to appear within forty days before the judgment-seat of God, and there answer for his crime. Smitten by the terrible summons, the duke put his house in order, appointed his remaining brother to succeed him, and died within the time specified. That is the record. Similar appeals were addressed—one in 1312, to Ferdinand of Castile, therefore called “el Cidado,” by the brothers Carvajal, whom he had sentenced to be thrown from a rock on a very dubious charge of murder ; another in 1314, to Pope Clement V. and King Philip the Fair, by Jacques de Molay, Grand Master of the Templars, who, as he stood bound with

the last batch of the doomed knights on the pile to which the executioner was just applying the torch, startled the crowds that had gathered in the April twilight to witness the spectacle by adjuring his oppressors to meet him within the year, in the presence of that Judge whose justice knew no bias.

And yet with all this atrocity it cannot be said that the Law was disregarded during the Middle Ages. Far from it—it was only too active and powerful when invoked by the strong. Indeed, in those aristocratic times, Law was the greatest aristocrat of all, just as during the Reign of Terror it was the thoroughest revolutionist. And it arrogated to itself the most extraordinary rights and immunities. Feeling a lack of intrinsic worth, it endeavoured to make amends for the deficiency like many another pretender, by an imposing presence. It had as many petty observances as the Church herself,—it clung as tenaciously to every one of them, and the executioner was its master of the ceremonies. Yes, Jack Ketch, detested as he is now, was a great character in the Middle Ages. But then he had something more to do than just to fasten a noose and draw a bolt. The attitude of the prisoner in the cart, the order of the fatal procession, the arrangement of the scaffold and its trappings, and the disposition of the assistants, required the minutest attention. The torture chamber, too, with its various appliances, could not be entrusted to a clumsy valet. And as faction very often brought the noble himself in contact with the executioner, it was necessary that the latter should have a delicate perception of the nice gradations of rank, and be capable of applying his tools with duly respectful demeanour to the sacred person of nobility. Indeed, polite phrases, neat compliments, and well-turned allusions to former achievements dropped nowhere so glibly as on the scaffold and from the lips of Master John Ketch. And this gentleman—for such, in some countries, the fall of a certain number of heads made him—prided himself as much on his skill with his weapons as any other gentleman of his time. Nor was it without reason. More than once has the trunk been known to remain erect for some minutes after the fatal stroke, as if unconscious of its loss. The Constable St. Pol was one of those who were decapitated thus dexterously; but it must be admitted that Little John, who struck the blow, was a master in his craft. *Carnifex nascitur non fit* is just as true as the other reading, and the worthy we have named was a born hangman. His intuitive grace and skill in all that concerned the scaffold excited the unqualified admiration of all his contemporaries, and placed him, while yet in his teens, at the very summit of his profession. But, like many another brilliant genius, he was doomed to an early grave. He quarrelled with a certain carpenter—one Ouden de Bust—over a disputed account, probably concerning repairs done to the gallows, for it is preposterous to suppose that such a man as Little John would degrade himself by associating with a mere vulgar wood-shaver, especially as another knight of the noose, and chiefly on account of his trade, had been selected not long before as a fit and proper companion by the Emperor Wenceslaus. Be that as it may, the

carpenter took his punishment to heart, and determined on revenge. Accordingly, one moonlight night, not very long after, Little John was waylaid by three ruffians, whom the carpenter had associated in his purpose, but by no means on limited liability principles. These youths had very probably some little account of their own in the way of whipping, branding, nose-slitting, and ear-clipping to settle with the worthy official. One of these pretty fellows—the chronicler who relates the circumstance expatiates on their good looks—seized the executioner and pinioned his arms; another, still more frolicsome, tapped him on the head with a paving-stone; and the third, the jolliest of the three, ran him through with a short pike. In five minutes Little John lay dead as the constable himself. Thereupon out rushed the carpenter, who had been eying the deed from behind a wall, and hewed off the dead man's feet by the ankles. All four immediately took sanctuary in a neighbouring church, which might have availed to protect them had the victim been any the less distinguished; but, unfortunately for the murderers in the present instance, the people of Paris, especially those who had anything to lose, were too much impressed with the value of the slaughtered man. For once popular indignation mastered popular superstition. The criminals were hauled out without consulting pope or bishop, and after a little torture—administered by the bereaved parent, Henry Cousins, headsman of Paris—the four were hung up “all in a row.”

But unquestionably the most renowned of these gentlemen was Capeluche, the headsman of Paris during the terrible days of the Armagnacs and the Burgundians. Capeluche patronised the latter party, and repeatedly conferred on Duke John the favour of a friendly squeeze of the hand. He was a prominent leader of the butchers, and did his utmost to refine the clumsy method of massacre peculiar to these gentry. Somehow or other authority found itself under the sad necessity of consigning this worthy in his turn to the scaffold, and most characteristic was his journey thither and his behaviour on it. The superintendence of the little affair was committed to one of his former assistants not equal to his work, and Capeluche devoted his last moments to the rectification of the faulty arrangements.

Like all other offices of honour and emolument, that of executioner was hereditary with the very strictest entail. And the emoluments were numerous. The executioner had a handsome fixed salary; he was accustomed to receive gratuities more or less splendid according to the rank of his victims; he was the first official to visit the scene of a suicide, and there, standing on the breast of the victim, he acquired a right to everything he could touch with the point of his seven-foot sword; the women of pleasure were his tributaries; he derived a large indirect income from the surgeons; and, finally, the unmarried executioner had the regal privilege of releasing a woman doomed to death and leading her free from the scaffold—on condition of marrying her.

Out of the Silence.

THERE is a certain crescent in a distant part of London—a part distant, that is, from clubs and parks and the splendours of Rotten Row—where a great many good works and good intentions carried out, have taken refuge. House-rent is cheap, the place is wide and silent and airy ; there are even a few trees to be seen opposite the windows of the houses, although we may have come for near an hour rattling through the streets of a neighbourhood dark and dreary in looks, and closely packed with people and children, and wants and pains and troubles of every tangible form for the kind colonists of Burton Crescent to minister to.

We pass by the Deaconesses' Home : it is not with them that we have to do to-day ; and we tell the carriage to stop at the door of one of the houses, where a brass-plate is set up, with an inscription setting forth what manner of inmates there are within, and we get out, send the carriage away, and ring the bell for admission.

One of the inmates peeped out from a door-way at us as we came into the broad old-fashioned passage. This was the little invalid of the establishment, we were afterwards told ; she had hurt her finger, and was allowed to sit down below with the matron, instead of doing her lessons with the other children upstairs.

How curious and satisfactory these lessons are any one who likes may see and judge by making a similar pilgrimage to the one which F. and I undertook that wintry afternoon. The little establishment is a sort of short English translation of a great continental experiment of which an interesting account was given some months ago in this Magazine under the title of *Dumb Men's Speech*. Many of my friends were interested in it, and one day I received a note on the subject.

"Dumb men *do* speak in England," wrote a lady who had been giving her help and countenance to a similar experiment over here ; and from her I learnt that this attempt to carry out the system so patiently taught by Brother Cyril was now being made, and that children were being shown how to utter their wants, not by signs, but by speech, and in English, at the Jewish Home for Deaf and Dumb Children in Burton Crescent.

The great difference in this German system as opposed to the French, is that signs are as much as possible discarded after the beginning, and that the pupils are taught to read upon the lips of others, and to speak in words, what under the other system would be expressed in writing or by signs. The well-known Abbé de l'Epée approved, they say, of this method, and wrote a treatise on the subject, and his successor, the Abbé Sicard, says (I am quoting from a quotation), "Le sourd-muet n'est donc totalement rendu à la société que lorsqu'on lui a appris à s'exprimer

de vive voix et de lire la parole dans les mouvements des lèvres." This following very qualified sentence of his is also quoted in a report which has been sent me : " Prenez garde, que je n'ai point dit que le sourd-muet ne peut pas parler, mais ne sait pas parler. Il est possible que Mapuiz apprit à parler si j'avais le temps de le lui apprendre."

Time, hours after hours of patience; good-will, are given freely to this work by the good people who direct the various establishments in the Netherlands where the deaf and dumb are now instructed.

How numerous and carefully organized these institutions are may be gathered from a little pamphlet written by the great Director Hirsch of Rotterdam, who first introduced this system into the schools, and who has lately made a little journey from school to school, to note the progress of the undertaking he has so much at heart. Brussels and Ghent and Antwerp and Bruges, he visited all these and other outlying establishments, and was received everywhere with open arms by the good brothers who have undertaken to teach the system he advocates. Dr. Hirsch is delighted with everything he sees until he comes to Bruges, where he says that he is struck by the painful contrast which its scholars present as compared to the others he had visited on his way. "They looked less gay (moins enjoué) than any of those he had seen." But this is explained to him by the fact that in this school the French method is still partly taught, and he leaves after a little exhortation to the Director, and a warning that public opinion will be against him if he continues the ancient system as opposed to the newer and more intelligible one. It is slower in the beginning, says the worthy Doctor ; it makes greater demands upon our patience, our time, our money, but it carries the pupil on far more rapidly and satisfactorily after the early steps are first mastered, until, when at last the faculty of hearing with the eyes has been once acquired, isolation exists no longer, the sufferer is given back to the world, and every one he meets is a new teacher to help to bring his study to perfection.

The Jewish Home for Deaf and Dumb Children in Burton Crescent has only been started for a few months. The lady who wrote to me guaranteed the rent and various expenses for a year, after which the experiment is to stand upon its own merits. Since the opening of the home I believe that great modifications have taken place in its arrangements, and that it is now to be enlarged and thrown open to any little dumb Christians who, as well as the little Jews, may like to come as day-scholars there, to be taught with much labour and infinite patience and pains what others learn almost unconsciously and without an effort.

F. and I have been going upstairs all this time, and come into a back-room or board-room, opening with folding-doors into the schoolroom, where the children are taught. As we went in the kind young master, M. von Praagh, (he is a pupil, I believe, of Dr. Hirsch's,) came forward to receive us, and welcomed us in the most friendly way. The children all looked up at us with bright flashing eyes—little boys and little girls in

brown pinafores, with cheery little smiling faces peeping and laughing at us along their benches. In the room itself there is the usual apparatus—the bit of chalk, the great slate for the master to write upon, the little ones for the pupils, the wooden forms, the pinafores, the pictures hanging from the walls, and, what was touching to me, the usual little games and frolics and understandings going on in distant corners, and even under the master's good-natured eye. He is there to bring out, and not to repress, and the children's very confidence in his kindness and sympathy seems to be one of the conditions of their education and cure.

He clapped his hands, and a little class came and stood round the big slate—a big girl, a little one, two little boys. "Attention," says the teacher, and he begins naming different objects, such as fish, bread, chamois, coal-skuttle. All these words the children read off his lips by watching the movement of his mouth. As he says each word the children brighten, seize the idea, rush to the pictures that are hanging on the wall, discover the object he has named, and bring it in breathless triumph. "Tomb," said the master, after naming a variety of things, and a big girl, with a beaming face, pointed to the ground and nodded her head emphatically, grinning from ear to ear. But signs are not approved of in this establishment, and, as I have said, the great object is to get them to talk. And it must be remembored that they are only beginners and that the home has only been opened a few months. One little thing, scarcely more than a baby, who had only lately come in, had spoken for the first time that very day,—“â, â, â,” cried the little creature. She was so much delighted with her newly-gotten power that nothing would induce her to leave off exercising it. She literally shouted out her plaintive little “â.” It was like the note of a little lamb, for of course, being deaf, she had not yet learned how to modulate her voice, and she had to be carried off into a distant corner by a bigger girl, who tried to amuse her and keep her still.

"It is an immense thing for the children," said Mr. von Praagh, "to feel that they are not cut off hopelessly and markedly from communication with their fellow-creatures; the organs of speech being developed, their lungs are strengthened, their health improves. You can see a change in the very expression of their faces, they delight in using their newly acquired power, and won't use the finger-alphabet even among themselves." And, as if to corroborate what he was saying, there came a cheery vociferous outbreak of "â's" from the corner where the little girl had been installed with some toys, and all the other children laughed.

I do not know whether little Jew boys and girls are on an average cleverer than little Christians, or whether, notwithstanding their infirmity, the care and culture bestowed upon them has borne this extra fruit; but these little creatures were certainly brighter and more lively than any dozen Sunday-school children taken at hazard. Their eyes danced, their faces worked with interest and attention, they seemed to catch light from their master's face, from one another's, from ours as we spoke; their eagerness, their cheerfulness and childish glee, were really remarkable;

they laughed to one another much like any other children, peeped over their slates, answered together when they were called up. It was difficult to remember that they were deaf, though, when they spoke, a great slowness, indistinctness, and peculiarity was of course very noticeable. But these are only the pupils of a month or two, be it remembered. A child with all its faculties is nearly two years learning to talk.

One little fellow with a charming expressive face and eyes, like two brown stars, came forward, and ciphered and read to us, and showed us his copy-book. He is beginning Hebrew as well as English. His voice is pleasant, melancholy, but quite melodious, and, to my surprise, he addressed me by my name, a long name with many letters in it. Mr. von Praagh had said it to him on his lips, for of course it is not necessary for the master to use his voice, and the motion of the lips is enough to make them understand. The name of my companion, although a short one, is written with four difficult consonants, and only one vowel to bind them together, and it gave the children more trouble than mine had done ; but after one or two efforts the little boy hit upon the right way of saying it, and a gleam of satisfaction came into his face as well as his master's. Mr. von Praagh takes the greatest possible pains with, and interest in every effort and syllable. He holds the children's hands and accentuates the words by raising or letting them fall ; he feels their throats and makes them feel his own. It would be hard indeed if so much patience and enthusiasm produced no results to reward it.

" What o'clock is it ? " Mr. von Praagh asked.

" Four o'clock," said the little boy, without looking up.

" How do you know ? " asked the master.

" Miss —— is come," said the little fellow, laughing. This was a lady who came to give the girls their sewing lesson so many times a week.

I need not describe the little rooms upstairs, with the little beds in rows, and the baths, the play-room—the kind arrangement everywhere for the children's comfort and happiness. If the school is still deaf and dumb for most practical purposes, yet the light is shining in ; the children are happy, and understand what is wanted of them, and are evidently in the right way. For the short time he has been at work as yet, Mr. von Praagh has worked wonders.

Babies, as I have just said, with all their faculties are about two years learning to speak. There is a curious crisis, which any one who has had anything to do with children must have noticed, a sort of fever of impatience and vexation which attacks them when they first begin to understand that people do not understand what they say. I have seen a little girl burst into passionate tears of vexation and impatience because she could not make herself immediately understood. I suppose the pretty croonings and chatterings which go before speech are a sort of natural exercise by which babies accustom themselves to words, and which they mistake at first for real talking. Real words come here and there in the midst of the baby-language—detaching themselves by degrees out of the wonderful labyrinth of sound

—real words out of the language which they are accustomed to hear all about them, and something in this way, to these poor little deaf folks, the truth must dawn out of the confusion of sights and signs surrounding them.

This marvellous instinctive study goes on in secret in the children's minds. After their first few attempts at talking they seem to mistrust their own efforts. They find out that their pretty prattle is no good : they listen, they turn over words in their minds, and whisper them to themselves as they are lying in their little cribs, and then one day the crisis comes, and a miracle is worked, and the child can speak.

When children feel that their first attempts are understood they suddenly regain their good temper and wait for a further inspiration. They have generally mastered the great necessities of life in this very beginning of their efforts : "pooty," "toos," "ben butta," "papa," "mama," "nana" for "nurse," and "dolly," and they are content. Often a long time passes without any further apparent advance, and then comes perhaps a second attack of indignation. I know of one little babe who had hardly spoken before, and who had been very cross and angry for some days past, who horrified its relations by suddenly standing up in its crib one day, rosy and round-eyed, and saying, *Bess my soul* exactly like an old charwoman who had come into the nursery.

A friend of mine to whom I was speaking quite bore out my remarks. He said his own children had all passed through this phase, which comes after the child has learned to think and before he is able to speak. One's heart aches as one thinks of those whose life is doomed to be a life of utter silence in the full stream of the mighty flow of words in which our lives are set, to whom no crisis of relief may come, who have for generations come and gone silent and alone, and set apart by a mysterious dispensation from its very own best blessings and tenderest gifts.

I was thinking of this yesterday as we went walking across the downs in the pleasant Easter-tide. I could hardly tell whether it was sight or sound that delighted us most as we went along upon the turf : the sound of life in the bay at the foot of the downs, the flowing of the waves just washing over the low-ridged rocks with which our coast is set ; the gentle triumphant music overhead of the larks soaring and singing in the sunshine. The sea and the shingle were all sparkling, while great bands like moonlight in daylight lay white and brilliant on the horizon of the waters. The very stones seemed to cry out with a lovely Easter hymn of praise ; and sound and sight to be so mingled that one could scarcely tell where one began or the other ended.

If by this new system the patient teachers cannot give everything to their pupils, the ripple of the sea, the song of the lark, yet they can do very much towards it, by leading the children's minds to receive the great gifts of nature through the hearts and sympathy of others, and give them above all that best and dearest gift of all in daily life, without which nature itself fails to comfort and to charm, the companionship of their fellow-creatures and of intelligences answering and responding to their own.

Charles Dibdin and his Songs.

ALTHOUGH Charles Dibdin cannot be put in any comparison with the "Three Lyrists," recently discussed in this Magazine, he was a man whose genius deserved something better than to be hidden in the obscurity which we observe to be creeping over his name. In the first place, he had about him that *cachet* of originality which is the primary merit of a writer, whatever be his school; for men of genius, like human beings, have each a face of their own, while modiocrities, like sheep and cattle, can only be distinguished from each other by experts. To this also must be added, that Dibdin exercised a lyrical influence—made an individual impression—by songs, such as English song-writers have scarcely ever attained. No doubt, English literature contains noble songs,—some of the noblest that have been produced since the myrtle-branch went round from singer to singer—each using his right of "a call" by passing it—at the banquets of the Greeks. But in popular songs,—songs for the open air, the country-gathering, the supper-table, and so forth,—England is less rich than countries which have never rivalled her in greater things. A company of Scotch farmers, or working men, has a far better stock of ditties to draw upon than we haughty Southrons, nor have we any poet who is to a Londoner what Béranger is to a Parisian. Unfortunately, also, this is a state of things which seems at present to be getting worse instead of getting better. Music has become eminently more diffused than it used to be, and good music has enjoyed a share of this improvement. But the song-writer proper, instead of retaining his old leadership, has sunk into a servant of the composer. Musicians have given us "songs without words," and writers have given us what we may call words without songs,—that is to say, words that do not deserve to be called songs, or to rank in literature at all, but are mere semi-mechanical conveniences for the use of the musical artist who still retains the faculty of creation. Sometimes, indeed, as the organs hourly remind us, both words and melody are trash; but we need not dwell on those terrible cases just now. We would only say that, for a time, the song-writer's power has been on the wane. Yet Moore did at least as much for Irish airs as Irish airs did for him; and some of the sweetest of the old Scotch airs would have been forgotten but for the infinitely powerful and infinitely tender lays to which Burns united them. We have all heard of music being married to immortal verse; but in our age they seem to have gone into the Divorce Court.

Now, besides that Charles Dibdin had a speciality in the *genre*,—a speciality for those sea-songs by which his name is chiefly, perhaps solely, remembered,—he was also a composer himself; differing, in this respect,

not only from Horace, Burns, and Beranger, but from most other lyrists of eminence, such as Scott and Campbell. Indeed, he arrived at song-writing through composition, and not at composition through song-writing. "A strong and intuitive propensity to music," he says in his autobiography, "modulated my mind, and cheated it, as it were, into poetry."* His early associations were favourable to him in this respect. Born at Southampton in 1745, he was sent young to Winchester, with some ambitious views towards the Church. But his case was the not uncommon one of a mistaken parental intention, really placing a youngster in conditions harmonising with his natural vocation. The genius of the future singer of "Poor Jack" and "Tom Bowling" was awakened—curiously enough—by the organ of a cathedral. The boy sang in anthems, and at concerts, and received some instruction from Fussell the organist. He began to compose, too, at fourteen, when he produced the air, "In Every Fertile Valley," which afterwards (in 1762) contributed to the success of his first successful piece, the pastoral drama of *The Shepherd's Artifice*. His musical education, however, was by no means thorough, and, like some other men of talent in a similar predicament, he was apt to overrate what unassisted nature can do. He spoke slightlying of the culture of his art; but since Mr. Hogarth assures us that "he never put a bass to one of his own songs without committing gross and palpable errors,"† this was distinctly a pity and a blunder. However, according to the same critic, his instinct of melody was something quite rare and remarkable, so the gift of musical genius cannot be denied him. The passion for its indulgence filled up all his youth, and the proper studies of the venerable foundation of Wykeham appear to have been wholly neglected by him. We regret to say that in one of his writings he speaks of Aristophanes as having belonged to the *Middle Comedy*, a statement which could not have been made at Winchester College in that rigid epoch without peril of flagellation.

While still a boy, Dibdin turned his eyes towards London as the head-quarters of music and of everything else. He had been one of a family of eighteen, and among the eighteen was a brother much older than himself, who holds an important place in his biography, besides being worth remembering for his own sake. This was Captain Thomas Dibdin,—father of the Reverend Mr. Frogmell Dibdin, the bibliographer—a stout seaman of superior talents and character. He had commanded privateers with distinguished gallantry, and also West and East Indiamen, in days when such commands required qualities not inferior to those of an officer of the Royal Navy. The little music-loving, song-loving, Winchester boy looked up to this "big brother" with a mixture of fraternal loyalty and poetic admiration. He was weary of singing anthems, or being asked about to amuse parties in the Cathedral Close or the officers' camp; and Captain Thomas urged him to come to London, and promised to

* *The Professional Life of Mr. Charles Dibdin, written by Himself.* (1803.)

† *Dibdin's Songs.* By George Hogarth. (1842.)

introduce him to friends of his in the City who might forward his aims. Not a doubt but this kindness of his brother stamped early on young Dibdin the love of sailors, which was, long afterwards, to make him celebrate them in song ; and it is equally certain that Captain Dibdin was the original of his famous "Tom Bowling." So Charles came up to London, full of musical ambition, and often, as he tells us, played the congregation out of St. Bride's before he was sixteen years old.

One of the friends to whom Charles Dibdin was introduced by his brother, was Johnson, the music-publisher of Cheapside. Johnson did not encourage his talents much, and galled the ambitious and high-spirited lad by setting him down, whenever he came to the shop, to tune harpsichords. Captain Dibdin, too, went on a voyage and was captured by a French man-of-war ; and his City friends found young Charles somewhat too independent in his notions, and not disposed to be made a mere amusing boon-companion. A Mr. Beranger, with whom he became acquainted, (perhaps of the family of the French *chansonnier*, who had relations settled in England,) took a liking to him, and made him known to Rich, the manager of Covent Garden, and other personages of the worlds of music and the drama. He plunged eagerly into these worlds. "The theatres and the opera houses," he says, "were regions of enchantment to me. . . . I have no power of expression that can give the faintest idea of what I felt when I heard the first crash of an overture. It was," adds he, "a great era for music." Galluppi was in England, and his music very popular. Corelli was much admired and studied. And England herself had Dr. Arne, whose genius exercised much influence over Dibdin, to whom he was personally very obliging, and by whom his name and memory were venerated. The success of Arne's *Artaxerxes* in 1762, left Garrick playing to empty benches, and Garrick made a timely tour to Italy. Dibdin began that year, while still in his teens, to make a little way. He was already a poet, composer, and singer, and he soon became an actor. Rich taught him where to lay what he used to call the "emphasis;" and when Rich was succeeded by his son-in-law, Beard, Dibdin was engaged as a chorus-singer at Covent Garden. For the copyright of the first half-dozen songs he sold, he got only three guineas. But Beard encouraged him to write *The Shepherd's Artifice*, already mentioned as his earliest success, which appeared when he was only seventeen, and won him some degree of reputation. The songs in this piece (it must be understood that we are looking at Dibdin in this essay from a literary point of view,) are poor ; and this is equally true of the songs in many similar pieces which followed. Dibdin began by imitating the regular, conventional, feebly epigrammatic, insincerely sentimental, eighteenth century manner. Not till he was about forty did he do justice to his true genius in the hearty, humorous, and genuinely tender nautical songs, on which his real fame rests.

It is an observation as old as Cicero's time, and probably older, that the world is very unwilling to admit the excellence of those who distinguish

themselves in more ways than one. Dibdin was a composer, at whom rival composers sneered; a singer, and therefore keenly scrutinized by singers; a poet, whom other writers of ballads looked at askance; and an actor whom jealous actors positively hated. Yet his music was held in respect by Arne; it could not be denied that he had a baritone voice of sweet and mellow quality;* his worst songs were up to the level of his time; and he undoubtedly succeeded as an actor in several parts. This variety, however, so precociously exhibited, and accompanied by energy of character, and, as we guess from his autobiography, by a pretty confident self-appreciation and self-assertion, goes far to explain the antagonism which he excited throughout his career. His theatrical life, whether as author, composer, or actor, was one of war,—war with managers, actors, music-sellers, and nearly everybody else. His actor's career became so intolerable to him that he gave up acting altogether. He quarrelled with Colman, when Colman succeeded Beard in Covent Garden. And his seven years' connection with Garrick was a kind of seven years' war, and terminated in a rupture. It is not likely that Dibdin, who was, beyond dispute, an able, honest, and most industrious man, was in the wrong in all these cases; nor, on the other hand, is it probable that he was invariably in the right. Garrick, unquestionably, sometimes treated him shabbily and tyrannically; and there is evidence enough from other quarters that the great actor, though capable of deeds of generosity, was morbidly vain, and apt to be arrogant, or mean, according as circumstances, and the characters of those with whom he was dealing, prompted him to arrogance or meanness. Dibdin was a struggling man, and very much in Garrick's power; if Dibdin had been a Churchill, Garrick would have crouched to him; if he had been a Foote, he would have courted him; if, like John Home, he had been the favourite of a Lord Bute, he would have brought out anything he pleased to write. As it was, he disliked Dibdin's independent temper, and did not do justice to his talents. But Dibdin was of great service to Garrick, both on the occasion of the famous Stratford Jubilee, and at Drury Lane.

The reader would not thank us if we attempted to give an account of the many musical pieces which Dibdin prepared for Drury Lane, Covent Garden, the Haymarket, Sadlers' Wells, and Ranelagh, between 1782, when he brought out *The Shepherd's Artifice*, and 1787, when he ceased to write for the stage. They are now only of antiquarian interest, except for a few of the songs, and even these are very inferior to the songs of a later period. His first sea-song, "Blow High, Blow Low," appeared in a comic opera called *The Seraglio*, produced at Covent Garden in the winter of 1776. But before he fairly got into that vein, he had some singular varieties of fortune to go through. And he also passed nearly two years of the period preceding the war with France which rose out of the American War, at Nancy in Lorraine. During this time he employed himself wisely

* *Memoir.* By Mr. GEORGE HOGARTH.

in studying the French language and literature. The people themselves he did not by any means love ; and it was with a hearty goodwill that he wrote war-songs against them when the great struggle began towards the close of the century.

Unpleasant as had been his relations to managers for so many years, no wonder that Dibdin ardently longed to have a theatre of his own. In the course of his musings on this idea, he hit upon what he thought an excellent site for such a purpose on the Surrey side of Blackfriars Bridge. Music, according to Dibdin, had altogether degenerated during the last twenty years. Horsemanship was in fashion. Why not, thought he, combine the stage with the ring, and produce entertainments of a novel character and a higher class ? A Colonel West, of the Guards, to whom the ground belonged, was favourable to him ; proprietors were forthcoming ; a licence was obtained ; and there arose, in due time, the "Royal Circus,"—now represented by the Surrey Theatre of our own day. Colonel West, however, died ; and Dibdin was soon embroiled with his colleagues. It will amuse the reader, and illustrate the temper of the man, if we quote a single sentence from his autobiography regarding these persons :—" While the leech, HUGHES, was sucking the blood of the proprietors, and fastening on the concern, the serpent, GRIMALDI, was coiled up till a proper moment should arrive to seize the management." Who can tell the rights or wrongs of such disputes at this distance of time ? or are they worthy subjects of research ? Of other men with whom he had differences, Dibdin always speaks with an obvious wish to do justice to their point of view, even under irritation. There was an instinct of intellectual honesty about him which no competent critic can mistake. But for Hughes and Grimaldi he has nothing but loathing ; and we are inclined to think that this was one of the quarrels in which he was in the right. He gave up all connection with the Circus, the affairs of which were a source of annoyance to him for years after. To us, for our present purpose, the most interesting fact about this episode in Dibdin's life is that his song "Grog and Girls" had its birth at the Royal Circus :—

A sailor and an honest heart,
Like ship and helm, are ne'er apart ;
Nor how should one stem wind and tide,
If t'other should refuse to guide ?
With that she freely cuts the waves,
And so the tar,
When daubing waves around him jar,
Consults his heart, and danger braves
Where duty calls ; nor asks for more
Than grog aboard, and girl ashore.
* * * * *

"Tis not that in the hottest fight
The mard'rous ball will sooner light
On him than any other spot,—
To face the cannon is his lot ;

He must of dangers have his share.
But honest tar,
Though fire, and winds, and water jar,
Consults his heart, and shakes off care ;
And when the battle's heat is o'er,
In grog aboard, drinks girl ashore.

Here we have not absolutely Dibdin's first sea-song, but the first in which his peculiar quality shows itself; a something simpler and more energetic than the then fashionable type of song, and an embodiment of what we may call his nautical philosophy. Perhaps it is as well that he failed to establish the Circus, and was thrown more and more upon himself alone. But he had another catastrophe to meet before the prosperous part of his career arrived. He planned, and began, in connection with a Mr. Leroux, a Clerkenwell justice, a theatre in St. Pancras, in the region now covered by Somers Town. "I have a hundred times," says he, "compared myself to an ant, that, when its nest is destroyed, never stands lamenting its misfortunes, but gets to work again, and either repairs the old nest or begins a new one." The new speculation was to be called Helicon; and the courageous singer went to work with spirit, planted poplars, and ran up a building. But the licence was refused; and, to crown all,—Dibdin having been called away to Southampton to attend his mother's death-bed,—a gale of wind came on, and blew his unlucky structure to the ground. Mr. Leroux completed the gale's work by helping himself to the *débris* of the edifice.

Never, as he informs us, was he "so completely driven into a corner as at this period," and it was now 1785, his fortieth year. He had broken off relations almost entirely with all the theatres. He had twice failed to establish a theatre for himself. He began to meditate going to India, where his brother, Captain Dibdin, who had become master-attendant at Nagore and a man of some property, had invited him to join him. The good captain died at the Cape, soon after the time of which we are speaking; but friends of his in India still urged Dibdin to come out and look after his affairs. To raise funds for the voyage, Dibdin resolved on making a tour through England with an entertainment. One very queer difficulty beset him in the course of this expedition—a difficulty which strongly brings home to one the vast changes that have taken place in our intercommunication in England since those days. He was constantly taken for an impostor, and had serious difficulty in convincing people in the country towns that he was the real Mr. Dibdin. The real Mr. Dibdin, he was told, was "a tall, sallow, thin old man, with a wig," whereas he was a stoutish, somewhat jolly-looking personage, wearing his own hair. One old tabby, the tea-table oracle of Worcester, told him plainly in the street that his assertion that he was Mr. Dibdin was a falsity, for that she had seen Mr. Dibdin at Birmingham, and he was a very different-looking man. The Mayor of Nottingham asked if he came with drums and trumpets, and if he was sure his entertainment would not corrupt the apprentice boys? Under these difficulties Dibdin still pursued his tour, and pub-

lished an account of it, with a distinguished subscription-list. He now sold all his songs to the music-sellers, that he might start for the East with all available funds, and the music-sellers took advantage of his position to make sordidly mean bargains with him ; for "The Waterman ; or, My Poll and My Partner Joe," they gave him two guineas ; and half a guinea for the famous stave, so familiar to our grandfathers, "Nothing like Grog."

In 1788 Charles Dibdin embarked on board ship in the river, and his first discovery was that the captain was even a worse character to deal with than the captain with whom Fielding had sailed for Lisbon thirty-four years before. "It has generally been a curious trait in my fortunes," observes Dibdin, with much naïveté, in recording these events, "to meet with men whose minds were full of depravity, and who were alike strangers to justice and humanity." If half what he tells us of this skipper be true—and we know no reason why it should be false—Dibdin did well to quit the vessel when she put into Torbay. He had been five days in the Channel in her, and this five days' cruise was the longest ever made by this our most popular English writer of sea-songs. Five days, however, of a man of genius, count for fifty days of anybody else ; and though Dibdin never became technically accurate in his use of sea-language, he had a very respectable knowledge of it for a landsman.

Having landed at Torbay—and sunk a hundred and fifty pounds to no apparent purpose—Dibdin resumed his entertainments. And he began at last to see that to concentrate himself on entertainments was his best policy. He resolved to do so ; and also opened a music-shop for the sale of his own songs, in spite of the rage of vulturous music-sellers, who denounced him as an interloper. His entertainments were held in different places—the establishment being always called *Sans Souci*. He began them in King Street, Covent Garden, with one called *The Whim of the Moment*, in 1788 ; and continued them, first in the Strand, and then at a little theatre which he (at last!) successfully created for himself in Leicester Place. The years from 1788 onwards were the most prosperous and the most productive, as far as quality is concerned, of Charles Dibdin's long and active life. His best sea-songs nearly all appeared in these entertainments, the very names of which are forgotten now. Thus "Poor Jack" and "The Sailor's Sheet-Anchor" belong to *The Whim of the Moment*; "The Flowing Can" and "Poor Tom, or the Sailor's Epitaph" to *The Oddities* (1789) ; "Jack at the Windlass" to *The Quizzes* (1792) ; and "Yo, heave ho!" to *The Tour to the Land's End* (1798). These entertainments were wholly Dibdin's own. He invented the simple machinery of story, which was the vehicle for his songs ; wrote the songs, and set them to music himself ; and sang them himself. He did not dress in character, but appeared before his audience (a pleasant-looking, gentlemanlike man, with a keen dark eye) in the blue coat, white waistcoat, black silk stockings, and breeches, of the old régime. He played his own accompaniment on an instrument—part piano, part organ—which was fitted up with gongs and bells, by which a variety of

effect could be produced when necessary. Thus the amusement was an intellectual one, depending, like those of the elder Mathews and the late Mr. Albert Smith, on the performer's individual talents and accomplishments. But its influence was not confined within its own limits, nor to amusement strictly so called. The songs which Dibdin wrote and sang there winged their way over the whole country. Great singers like Incledon, who almost swore by Dibdin, performed them to delighted crowds. They were heard in drawing-rooms and at supper-tables, in theatres and at concerts. And as the mighty Revolutionary War progressed, and England warmed into a red heat of patriotic pride and furious Anti-Gallicanism, the singer, who had begun as a rather watery *Anacreon*, rose into something of an *Alceus* or *Tyrtaeus*. Crowds listened to him with the eagerness of the shades gathering round *Alceus*, in Horace's famous ode :—

Pugnas et exactos tyrannos
Densum humeris bibit aure vulgus.

Dibdin is, indeed, called the *Tyrtaeus* of the war by so high an authority as the *Edinburgh Review* of 1828. He had then been just nine years dead. The praise is extravagant, no doubt, but it is valuable, as showing the opinion of contemporaries.

Up to this period—that of the revolutionary war—comparatively little had been done for the representation of *any* side of naval life in our literature. The admirable novels of Smollett had made a worthy beginning, and they have certainly not been surpassed since, for truthfulness, shrewdness, and a broad hearty humour,—a humour always vigorous and pungent, but which could be,—as in the description of the last hours of Commodore Trunnon—tender also. We have a sea song or two earlier than Smollett, such as the lively doggerel on the action in which Benbow received his death-wound; the pleasant comic stanzas of Lord Dorset written during the Dutch wars of the Restoration; and the “scurvy tune,” which Stephano sings in the *Tempest*. Nay, we may remount to Chaucer’s “*Shipman*” for proof that the fundamental basis of the traditional naval character of our humourists had been laid down in our literature very early :—

And certainly he was a good felaw.
Ful many a draught of win he hadde draw
From Burdeux ward, while that the chapman slepe
Of nice conscience tolke he no kepe.
* * * *

Hardy he was, and wise, I undertake :
With many a tempest haide his berd be shake.

Dibdin may thus be said to have followed up a tradition; but—like the Navy itself of the Great War for that matter—he added as much to the tradition as he derived from it. And this was natural enough; for although Abercrombie and Aboukir must never be forgotten, the naval glories of the epoch belonged to the first part of the war, as the military glories to the conclusion of it. The battles of the First of June, St. Vincent,

Camperdown, the Nile, and Trafalgar, were all fought within less than a dozen years. Hence, there was a perpetual inspiration given to a song-writer whose forte lay in naval song; besides which, Dibdin had not only seen the generation of Rodney, but could remember the generation of Hawke. Luckily too, the earliest triumphs of the successful period of his career were made with nautical songs, with "Poor Jack," and "The Greenwich Pensioner," the latter of which sold more than ten thousand copies, just at the time his entertainments began. In "Poor Jack," he strikes the characteristic chord of his distinctive lyrical instrument:—

D'y'e mind me, a sailor should be every inch
 All as one as a piece of the ship,
 And with her brave the world without offering to flinch
 From the moment the anchor's a-trip.
 As for me, in all weathers, all times, sides, and ends,
 Nought's a trouble from duty that springs ;
 For my heart is my Poll's, and my rhino's my friend's,
 And as for my life, 'tis the King's :
 Even when my time comes, ne'er believe me so soft
 As for grief to be taken aback,
 For the same little cherub that sits up aloft
 Will look out a good berth for Poor Jack !

We may remark, in this long popular song, not only its homely freshness and humour, and manly moral tone, but a dramatic power which was of the essence of Dibdin's genius. He had, like Burns and Béranger, though in an inferior degree, (for he has left nothing equal to "The Jolly Beggars," or "Les Souvenirs du Peuple,") the power not only of expressing an emotion, but of fixing, in form and colour, a character or scene. His ideal Jack Tar is now and then theatrical,—and it is the reproach of the modern stage that we say "theatrical" when we mean artificial and unreal. Nay, when the utilitarian value of the songs came to be seen, and they were served out to keep up patriotism and dispel mutinous feeling,—like lime-juice as a preventive of scurvy,—a certain factitious character, pointed out before in this Magazine, came to attach to them. There is, in fact, some theatrical exaggeration,—a painting of the blue deeper than the blue of nature,—something recalling T. P. Cooke, rather than the Navy, to men who really know the Navy,—about the sea-songs of Dibdin. But this does not belong to them universally; while, to resume what we were saying of his dramatic force, as distinct from his theatrical cleverness and the results of his theatrical associations, his Jack Tar is a living figure. He did not, at least when at his best, exhibit a mere marionette, in a Guernsey frock, a pig-tail, and duck trowsers, at *Sans Souci*. He held sound principles of art. "A ballad," he declares, "considered as a lyric composition, without which distinction it has but little worth, is a very superior kind of poem, and demands a degree of genius and inspiration that can neither be taught nor explained; and for the composition of music necessary to give force and effect to such words, the mind shuns everything affected and fantastic, and seeks an asylum in the bosom of Nature." (*Professional*

Life, by Himself, vol. iii., p. 42.) This is good doctrine, and in his best songs he carries it into practice. We could hardly have a better specimen of his simpler and prettier manner than the one we shall now transcribe, viz., his

LOVELY NAN.

Sweet is the ship that, under sail,
Spreads her white bosom to the gale ;
Sweet, oh ! sweet the flowing can ;
Sweet to poise the labouring oar,
That tugs us to our native shore,
When the boatswain pipes the barge to man :
Sweet sailing with a fav'ring breeze ;
But oh ! much sweeter than all these,
Is Jack's delight—his lovely Nan.

The needle, faithful to the North,
To show of constancy the worth,
A curious lesson teaches man :
The needle time may rust, the squall
Capsize the binnacle and all,
Let seamanship do all it can ;
My love in worth shall higher rise,
Nor time shall rust, nor squalls capsize,
My faith and truth to lovely Nan.

When in the bilboes I was penn'd
For serving of a worthless friend,
And every creature from me ran ;
No ship performing quarantine
Was ever so deserted seen,
None hail'd me—woman, child, nor man ;
But though false friendship's sails were furl'd,
Though cut adrift by all the world,
I'd all the world in lovely Nan.

I love my duty, love my friend,
Love truth and merit to defend,
To moan their loss who hazard ran ;
I love to take an honest part,
Love beauty, with a spotless heart,
By manners love to show the man ;
To sail through life by honour's breeze—
'Twas all along of loving these
First made me dote on lovely Nan.

Not to relish this pleasant little song would show an equal want of heart and ear. It has natural sentiment, without exaggeration ; a touch of point, without epigrammatic glitter ; and just nautical colour enough,—a flavour of salt,—while occasionally Dibdin almost pedantically affects the technical language of seamanship. It is this pedantry that betrays him sometimes into blunders analogous to those of the gentlemen who will quote Latin and Greek without knowing them. Thus, in “Grieving's a Folly”—a hearty rollicking song enough—we find,—

One night as we drove with two reefs in the main-sail,
And the scud came on low'ring upon a lee-shore,
Jack went up aleft for to hand the top ga'nt-sail,
A spray wash'd him off, and we ne'er saw him mow.

But the top-gallant sails would have been taken in long before it came to double-reefing the courses :—unless, to be sure, in the case of a Turkish squadron we once saw in the Mediterranean, where the breeze having freshened, the men could not be got to go aloft for that purpose, and the officers had to cut away the whole business with axes or tomahawks. Again, in “ Saturday Night,” the bard informs us, that,—

For all the world just like the ropes aboard a ship—
 Each man's rigged out
 A vessel stout,
 To take for life a trip.
 The shrouds, the stays, the braces,
 Are joys, and hopes, and fears ;
 The halliards, sheets, and traces,
 Still, as each passion veers,
 And whim prevails,
 Direct the sails,
 As on the sea of life he steers.

Yet the halliards and sheets have nothing to do with *directing* the sails, while the braces, to which he assigns a different set of functions, have. “ Sheet ” seems an unlucky word for song-writers. Allan Cunningham, in a well-known song, talks of—

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
 evidently not knowing that a sheet is a rope. “ Honest Allan’s ” whole stanza, however, is absurd, for his ship is flying *before* a wind that follows fast, and he makes her leave old England “ on the lee.” A still more extraordinary error of Dibdin’s occurs in “ The Token ” :—

The breeze was fresh, the ship *in stays*,
 Each breaker hush’d, the shore a haze,
 When Jack no more on duty call’d,
 His true love’s tokens overhaul’d.

Surely a man who took so much interest in sailors, and wrote so much about them, must have known what a ship’s being “ *in stays* ” means ? Our next sample is more excusable :—

The squall tore the main-sail to shivers,
 Helm a-weather the hoarse boatswain cries,

—though Dibdin ought to have known that *conning* the ship is no part of the duty of a boatswain.

More minute criticism would easily find other slips of this kind. But, on the whole, they interfere very little with the merit of Dibdin’s songs, which though accepted and enjoyed among sailors, were still more directly addressed to the world at large, before whose eyes they held up a good ideal of the nautical character and so strengthened the popularity of the service. When we consider what that ideal was, and how broad the humour in the sunshine of which Dibdin set it forth, we feel that our lot has been cast upon a much more rigid generation. The virtues of Dibdin’s blue-jacket are social and, above all, professional virtues. He is to be loyal, brave, cheerful, truth-telling, generous ; but his morality in other respects is most indulgently

viewed. It is accepted as a matter of course that he shall squander his pay upon "Grog and Girls;" and all that possible improvement in his condition which our Sailors' Homes, &c., are established to effect, is totally ignored. "Jack in his Element" sings to the following tune :—

I've a spanking wife at Portsmouth Gators,
 A pygmy at Goree,
 An orange-tawny up the Straits,
 A black at St. Lucie :
 Thus, whatsomever course I bend,
 I lead a jovial life,
 In every mess I find a friend,
 In every port a wife.
 * * * *
 Thus be we sailors all the go,
 On fortune's sea we rub ;
 We works and loves, and fights the foc,
 And drinks the generous bub.
 Storms that the masts to splinters rend,
 Can't shake our jovial life ;
 In every mess we find a friend,
 In every port a wife.

Those whose naval experience is old enough to reach back to the time when Trafalgar men were still to be found afloat, are not likely to forget the legends of the age which Dibdin painted. The Navy had a system of ethics of its own which might well appal Exeter Hall—though, we venture to say, that it was less corrupting than many a fashionable novel of our own time. "The Service" and its efficiency was pretty well all that commanding officers took into consideration ; and for the rest they were content to hope with Nelson, in one of his letters, that there was a large allowance made for them in the other world. They flogged a man, not for drunkenness, but for being drunk *on duty*. That he should get drunk on shore was accepted as a mere matter of course. Indeed, we are ourselves old enough to remember a seaman serving afloat, who regularly, as the anniversary of a famous action in which he had been engaged came round, used to appear on the quarter-deck and respectfully ask permission to get drunk ! Never did the worthy man neglect to avail himself of his captain's indulgence. As for Poll and Nan, the captains of the old school were equally tolerant. If a lass's fingers were pretty, they did not look too closely at them for a wedding ring ; and our ships swarmed in harbour with the "wives," "aunts," "sisters," and "cousins" of all hands. These respectable family appellations were the "homage," to use Rochefoucauld's famous maxim, that the service paid to the prevailing religion of the country. And if you asked a captain about it all, he could only shrug his shoulders and say, "What am I to do ? If the men go ashore, I shall lose a lot of them ; and the ship must be manned." In a certain case, where two men-of-war were lying together—at Spithead, if our memory serves us—the captain of one of them set his face against this flux of visitors, while his neighbour permitted it freely. In an hour or two the crew of the inhospitable gentleman's vessel were in a state of mutiny, and he hurried

off in great excitement to report the fact to the port admiral. The port admiral belonged to "the old school" himself, and acted with decision. The moment he knew the circumstances, he hoisted a signal, "Fifty women from the 'Vengeance' to be sent to the 'Bellorophon,'" and order was speedily restored. Such was the Navy of which Dibdin was at once the Tyrtæus and the Anacreon. He performed both parts with spirit; and one cannot wonder that the Hannah More school should have protested against such a bard's being countenanced by the Government. Dibdin was put in the index, in the very first issue of tracts produced by the evangelical reaction of the close of the last century. That reaction told upon the navy as everywhere else; but the decay of Dibdin's influence there has been less due to it, than to the wider changes comprehended in a transition from war to peace, from sailing-ships to steamers and ironclads. His sea-songs are in great part war-songs, which in time of peace lose their interest; they are also, in great part, songs of an epoch and a school. He does not reach the standard of a singer for all time, though he is a genuine singer within his range, and allowing for his limitations.

In the days of our grandfathers, however, Dibdin was unquestionably a power, and a beneficent and patriotic one. He was so fertile that he declares himself to have written nine hundred songs; and so punctual and energetic in his business that "no apology," he assures us, "was ever made for his non-attendance" during two-and-forty years. He asserts, likewise, at a period when no such assertion could have been falsely made with impunity, that his "songs had been quoted in mutinies to the restoration of order and discipline." But the proof that his influence as an Anti-Jacobin and Anti-Gallican writer was real and considerable, is his having received a pension in 1808 from Pitt's Government,—a Government slow to acknowledge literary merit; and the Scotch department of which, a few years before, had allowed Burns to live and die a gauger. This pension of 200*l.* was withdrawn by the administration which followed, and only a part of it restored not long before his death, in 1814. One supposed reason of this was his publication of a song pleading the cause of the "hardy tars," whose sufferings were much less interesting to the Admiralty than their enthusiasm when needed for service. But, as far as we know, this explanation is conjectural. Dibdin was probably only sacrificed, like scores of the gallant fellows whose prowess he celebrated and whose leisure he cheered, to his want of parliamentary or family connections. Be that as it may, the loss was disastrous to him, and he found it impossible to regain his position. He had sold his theatre on the strength of the pension, in 1805, and retired to Cranford. He was forced to resume his entertainments and again to open a music-shop in 1808, in his sixty-third year,—he who had begun public life while he was still in a jacket! After a struggle, the long career of the veteran—itself no bad counterpart of the stormy and strifeful career of the men-of-war's men—the "Tom Toughs" and "Tom Tackles," whom he sang—ended in bankruptcy. A subscription was raised for him in 1810, and on the small proceeds of

this he again went into retirement in Arlington Street, Camden Town. Paralysis came upon him the year before his death, and he died on July 25, 1814, after a period of bodily helplessness, and, we fear, of privation. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, in recording the event, speaks of "the influence of his songs upon our gallant tars" as an acknowledged and familiar fact. Of his private life it says that he was "improvident," but his improvidence, it adds, "chiefly appeared in a too hospitable style of living," for "he was never a gamester, nor addicted to the bottle." It is to be regretted that we cannot speak of his domestic life with commendation. He had excellent qualities, as has been amply shown already, and he did good service in his time to England and English literature. But in a professed biographical sketch it is wrong to omit any important feature of a man's history; and it must be honestly narrated of Charles Dibdin, that after his first marriage he formed an illicit connection with a chorus-singer at Drury Lane, Mrs. Davenet, by whom he was father of Charles and Thomas Dibdin, also song-writers and dramatists; and that he deserted his mistress for another woman, as he had deserted his wife for his first mistress.* He afterwards married the successor of Mrs. Davenet, who, as well as her daughter, survived him. To them, it must be added, he was constant and tender; and they placed on his modest tombstone, in St. Martin's, Camden Town, the celebrated verses from his "Tom Bowling":—

His form was of the manliest beauty,
His heart was kind and soft,
Faithful, below, he did his duty,
But now he's gone aloft.

To part of this high praise Dibdin was certainly entitled; and there are many epitaphs which are wholly false. He rests in a bleak churchyard, now closed,—originally a colony of the dead removed from the parish of St. Martin's to that of St. Pancras, and situated just on the north side of Pratt Street, Camden Town. His monument, enclosed in a railing, stands as nearly as possible in the centre, and close to a somewhat dismal willow tree. An admirer planted a bay-tree at the head of the grave a few years ago; but according to "the gardener of that ground" it does not thrive,—perhaps from some occult sympathy with the waning renown of "the poor inhabitant below." Let us hope that there is a period of renewed life in store for the bay and the singer. Dibdin's songs and memory are things that we should be sorry to let die,—the rather that a Dibdin for Ironclads is a kind of poet whom we are not likely to see arise during the remainder of our pilgrimage.

* *Memor by George Housman*, p. xxii., xxiii., "I never offended my father in my life . . ." writes Thomas Dibdin in his *Autobiography*, ". . . but I never received a shilling from him." (Vol. ii., p. 226.)

B r i t i s h e .

That which a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

CHAPTER I.

A V O N H O E .



HAT which strikes a foreigner most in the general aspect of England is the evidence of the long absence of struggle and war shown by the un-walled villages, the scattered cottages, the undefended country-houses. In Germany the traveller crosses mile after mile of cultivated land without a habitation, then he reaches a miserable mass of wretched streets, shut in by confining walls with an armed gateway, and a castle which has either been at perpetual war with the village, or its most exacting protector. In France, in the same way, the cottages seem to have clung together like sheep for help, under the shelter of some seigneur who has too often been their worst foe.

In England every man has lived so long under the shadow of his own apple-tree and gooseberry-bush, that we have forgotten how much wretchedness we have been spared. As an old soldier who had been in most of the later European wars once said, pointing to the trunk of an old white rose against a cottage which certainly had not attained such a size under a hundred years, "Tiens!" said he, "what a tale that tells! Oh, if you could conceive the havoc when friend as well as foe cuts and tears down for fuel, and pillages for food, even if he pays! but you have never heard or seen such things in England, and do not even know how much you have to be thankful for!"

There is one district, however, even in England, which was so well fought over at the time of our last trial of the kind, that even yet cannon-balls and bits of armour (strange combination for our ideas of war) are turned up by the plough. The old manor-houses are full of papers connected with the period: old portraits, curious tombs, brasses, reliques



"AND NOT HIM I THE HEAD AS HE LAY'

of all kinds abound. It is a very historical region ; the stirring nature of the events has left such impress on the country that they are still its most important feature, and no modern manufacturing towns nor trim "gentlemen's seats" have as yet laid waste the old memories. Two hundred years have pretty nearly effaced the traces of the civil wars elsewhere, but looking over the wide plain which stretches far and fertile in the centre of England, one cannot but think continually of the fierce fights which once raged there.

A number of promontories or headlands, many miles apart, stand out in the sea of plain, flat as the sea itself, and where it must once have rolled. On one "the king" occupied a camp ; another was the look-out of Cromwell ; far off is a lone house which was defended by a lady and cannonaded in no chivalrous spirit by Prince Rupert ; on a fourth was fought one of the most important battles of the war ; while at Avonhoe lie the foundations and remains of rather a large manor-house, fortified by its owner, "a most true and loyal gentleman," taken after a regular siege by "Colonel Cromwell," and burnt down on the approach of the king's forces. It had been rebuilt and again pulled down in later times.

In the excessive flatness of the valley a small eminence tells, and though hardly to be called a hill in a really hilly country, there was something very beautiful in the little headland, which stood out boldly with a steep side to the plain. The remains of an old avenue of very large trees led along the top of the hill to where once the house had stood, with its terraces and gardens all plainly marked in the great green carpet of grass, but hardly a stone of which remained one on another. Behind it stood a beautiful and elaborately carved church, strangely out of keeping with the few wretched scattered cottages which were all that remained of the little settlement. It looked more like a dainty college chapel than a village church, and though utterly neglected, and in some places almost ruinous, the carved woodwork, the altar, tombs, brasses, and stone canopies, the painted glass of the enormous Henry VII. windows, testified to the former grandeur of the family who had reared it.

The great house stood back a little with its dependencies (God's house included), and sheltered from the wind ; but on the extreme point of the hill, in the most exposed place it could find, stood a little old farmhouse, so small indeed that nowadays it would hardly rank above a cottage. The time for small kingdoms is evidently at an end. Of how many sovereignties are England and France composed, not to mention the Italy and Germany which we have seen grow up under our own eyes ? The big rat is eating out the little rat everywhere, and the little mill and the small farm are fast going the way of the Dukes of Parma and the Kings of Hanover.

Benzin, that is Benjamin the son of Amaziah (his surname, Pangbourne, might as well have not existed, for it was never used),^{*} the

* Some time fifty years ago was almost as uncommon in the district as in the days of the Plantagenets.

farmer who lived at Hawk's Hill, had about forty acres, and rated himself and his position highly. In those days there were few people to dispute it within reach, and those few he looked down upon, none the less that there was a cloud upon his house. His daughter had come back with a child after having been out as dairymaid for two or three years. She had originally gone to a squire's house in the neighbourhood, but had been sent down far into the north to some relations of the family. When she returned home she would give no explanation, made no excuses for herself, would listen to no reproof, but was sullen and obstinate like her father. She was a tall, strong-made woman, with very handsome features, but a fierce expression, and those determined cold blue eyes which are so much more alarming than dark ones, because the lightning does not gather and flash and go out, but broods and lives on.

After the first burst of passion was over, Benyam was rather glad to have her home again. One son had died, and another had wandered off to seek his fortune, and he wanted help with the cows—it saved a dairymaid. The butter, which is the staple of the county, was packed in baskets and left overnight under a hedge, for the carrier to pick up in his rounds, for the consumption of some distant great town, and the primitive manners of the district made it as safe as in the locked dairy, where Cecily had again returned to the skimming and washing and shaping and stirring which make women's lives in dairy countries so hard—"for butter is a very perjincketty thing," as Mrs. Benyam often observed, "and very often doesn't come as it did a ought to."

It was a cold stormy winter's morning, with a threatening of snow, and she was preparing to go to the shop. The only opening for this important sphere of action was a wretched huckster's in a wretched village some four miles off, to be reached only over the field-roads and across a wild sort of half common, half moor, called the "Seech." It was an outing, however, that Mrs. Benyam by no means liked to lose, for it was the single occasion on which she saw the outside world. She generally rode on a cart-horse in state, as befitted the wife of a farmer, a lady of distinction; but the nag was lame, and she had waited till supplies had run rather short of the few things they required which they did not either grow or make for themselves.

"You'll ha' snow before night and be cotched," said Benyam, sullenly, as he saw her preparing to depart.

"You'd best not go to-day, mother," said Cecily, looking out at the grey weather, which was gathering over the wide view at their feet.

"Ye both on ye want to rob me my outing," answered the old woman sourly.

Cecily had made an effort in offering to go, for she heartily disliked being seen in the village, and she turned away fiercely when her offer was thus met.

Her boy, a magnificent broad-shouldered child, just able to run and get into mischief, came into the room as his grandmother left it; but

there was no gleam of tenderness on his mother's face. He had got hold of the stocking which she was knitting, she snatched it from him and gave him a violent slap ; the boy's look at her was more of anger than fear before he burst into a sob of pain, and his grandfather calling out, " if the little devil didn't hold his tongue he'd wring his neck for 'im," Cecily carried him off struggling and screaming, and shut him up in the empty house-place. It was not a happy household at Hawk's Hill.

Mrs. Benyam had been rather late in starting ; the snow held off longer than they expected, but towards evening it began to fall, in large slow flakes at first, then faster and faster, and a driving wind arose—the pitiless, searching blast which takes away the courage to fight for life with the snow.

" Don't ye see her a coming ? " said Cecily, as she stood watching the thick flakes, which shut out even the grey sky, while her father came in once or twice as he drove the sheep into shelter and foddered the cows, as if he expected by some sort of magic to find his wife within.

" She's stopped at the shop," he said, decidedly, as he stood running his fingers through his wet hair, evidently not liking to face the question or the storm.

Cecily shook her head. " The snow didn't begin till she'd a started hum," she said. " I'll go up to the Church cottages. Simon Martin the ratcatcher were there at his daughter's, and the dogs along wi' him, and I'll axe him for to go with ye, and Jared mun be made ring the storm-bell."

It was a struggle to fight her way, even when she reached the comparative shelter of the avenue to the church : the cutting wind seemed to pierce into her like a knife.

It was hard work to rout out old Jared the sexton. " Storm-bells ! There ain't no need o' storm-bells, not yet," said he, stolidly. But she insisted, and presently the strange weird sound of the bells rung backwards—a sort of tocsin to guide the wanderers over the " Seech"—arose in the dark air. But Mrs. Benyam did not appear. At length, as the night fell, the wind lulled, and a splendid moon arose—which, reflected from the brilliant new-fallen snow, made everything as bright as by day, but with a sad, cold, strange look, like the features of a face one knows and loves changed and set by death. Benyam by this time had been round to the cottages, and collected two or three men to help him. They were wet and tired after a hard day's work, but, with that unconscious self-sacrifice which is so touching among the poor, no man refused the risk or the pains for his neighbour. Keener senses than theirs, however, were wanted in the difficult work.

" Quick," said her master to a shaggy sheep-dog, small and light and wiry, and who looked far the most sensible and sagacious of the company, " search, lass, search ! " and she set to work in a most business-like manner. It was a toilsome task ; the snow had hardly had time to harden, and they sank sometimes up to the waist in the drifts, while the

cruel, remorseless white fleecy bed lay so pure, so light, so innocent, as if it were the most harmless thing in creation.

At length they reached the "Seech," a wide dreary open sedgy moorland, across which the cold drifts were driven, without any break or protection. It is now enclosed and converted into rich corn-fields; but agriculture had not much changed the face of the country in that district fifty years ago. It was probably in exactly the same state as when Cromwell, as told by tradition, making a (royal) progress through his dominions, was met and entreated to take a day's hawking by the mayor and burgesses of the nearest town—"which his highness was graciously pleased to accept." The ground was intersected with many water-courses, so that to wander from the road in such weather was almost certain death for an aged woman.

"'Tis no use a goin' any further," said old Simon; "the moor on all sides is one with the road. She ain't alive surely, an she hadn't got as fur as this."

They stood still for a moment, looking out on the moorland stretching far before them, bare and lonely: there was a peculiar wildness and desolation about it: they called, but the booming of a bittern, roused by the dogs, was the only sound in answer. A group of weird old thorns, driven by the wind and tangled against the lee side, casting delicate pale blue shadows on the snow in the moonlight, stood just on the edge of the Seech, and alongside them a great heap of stones, commonly called the grave of the Gipsy King, but which probably had existed as a cairn in times very much older. Suddenly Quick began to scratch and whine, and whisk her shaggy tail; the other dogs followed her, and from under the thick-set boughs, which had kept a space for breath, the old woman was dug out, with still a little life left in her. She had got through the most difficult part of her journey, and had fallen, as so often happens, when the worst was comparatively over.

"Eh, we had a sore time a gettin' of her home," said Simon, "for all she weren't so very heavy. I mind when she were a fine lusty maid, that was she! but women they falls away like butter before the sun, bytimes," he went on rather sadly. He lived in a dairy country, and his similes savoured accordingly. "She mourned so when we riz her over the drifts as 'twere pitiful," said the old man, when with great difficulty they reached Hawk's Hill.

CHAPTER II.

THE GOOD OLD TIMES.

Mrs. BENYAM recovered, but only so far as to sit up racked with rheumatism, bound to her arm-chair, by the great old chimney corner. The house was built in almost the oldest form of dwelling still existing. Great trunks of trees—shaped with the axe, not the saw—were planted in the ground, and rested against each other at the top of the house, arching

over like the timbers of a ship turned topsy-turvy. It was as if the builders were afraid the upper story might be blown off if not thus bound together with the one beneath—a style of architecture belonging, it is said, to the fourteenth century.

The kitchen where she sat was large and long, and low and dark, with the window at one end and the fireplace at the other, very dreary. Great brown beams held up a sort of rack over her head, whence hung the strings of onions, the fitches of bacon, dried herbs, the whole larder and still-room. On an old dark oak dresser, with twisted columns and a beautiful carved cornice, which had evidently come at some period out of the big house, stood the plate, art and literature of the family—*Dialogues of Devils*, a “Breeches Bible,” much unused, and *Zadkiel’s Prophetic Almanac* (prophecies of the future seem to have particular interest for people who cannot understand much of the present); while art was represented by the portrait of a murderer framed, and two painted plaisters of a lady in blue hat and red and yellow garments, and a gentleman in top-boots.

Year after year the old woman lived on, with everything about her kept beautifully clean by Cecily, who cared for her scrupulously, but always in her cold hard manner. “ ‘Tis a’most all my labour for to wait o’ her,” said she. Mrs. Benyam’s only real comfort was in the child: he kept her from dying of her forced inaction and ennui, and she was the nearest approach to a playfellow, with all her fretful crossness, that the small Rupert (Robert his grandfather always called him “for contrairiness”) had ever had.

She wore a black silk bonnet over her mob-cap and an old red cloak—which last, however, she put on very unwillingly. “ ‘Twere my mother’s, and ‘tis nigh on seventy years old, and I wants to kip it for my best, for when I’m old and wants it,” said she.

“ You’ll never want it more nor now,” answered Cecily, shortly, wrapping it round her as she sat in her great chair with a staff in her hand, and the black cat opposite her, by the low fire on the hearth supported by iron dogs, and with a queer wrought-iron back or “reredos,” against which the fuel was built. She looked like a respectable old witch with her familiar. It was a striking old face, though the nose and chin were now fast approaching each other—with plenty of power in it both for thought and feeling—all, however, unused.

The little boy sat close by her on a small three-legged stool: he was a turbulent, self-willed child in general, but he would sometimes keep by her side for a long time together, looking preternaturally solemn and considerate, as he listened to her talk, fitful under such circumstances.

They were on terms of the most perfect equality. The difference between seventy and four years old might perhaps give the grandmother a certain superiority in mere knowledge of the world and authority; but then Rupert had an uncommonly sturdy little pair of legs, and the power of locomotion restored the balance between them, or even inclined it to his side.

“ You give over pulling them tongs about like that,” said she; “ you’ll knock down they hosen o’ yer grampy’s, and they’ll get burnt.”

" I shan't," answered the child. " I likes to pull the tongs about."

" Then I'll give yer the stick," observed his grandmother, " and ye won't like that."

" Ye can't get at me," said he, moving hastily back, stool and all, out of her reach, with a kitten in his arms, which got much pinched in the retreat.

" Don't ye squeedge the kitten like that, Ruby ; 'twill hurt her."

" I likes to hurt her," replied he ; " it makes her holler, and I likes to hear her holler."

A child is often cruel from the mere love of action, doing something, the new sense of exercising power.

" Then I hope she'll scratch ye," said the old woman, as the old cat came to the rescue, and in the fight which ensued, right and the kitten decidedly got the best of it, to the great advantage of morality.

" What's all that noise about ? " said Cecily, hearing the uproar and coming down upon them ; but the confederates knew better than to give each other up to the enemy, and preferred settling their quarrels between themselves.

" It ain't nothing at all," muttered the grandmother ; " only play. He's a beautiful child he is, and never so much as howled when he burnt his fingers a messin' wi' the kettle yesterday, for all he's only in his five."

" Why did ye let him touch it ? " replied Cecily, by no means in a tender tone. " Ye lets 'im do a vast o' things we never was suffered to, when we was little uns."

" Ye're so hard," cried the old woman ; " ye don't care a mossel for 'im, no more nor he weren't yourn. I can't think how 'tis."

Mrs. Benyam grew weaker, but she still clung to her corner. One cold late spring two or three years later she was cowering over the fire, suffering more even than usual from the bitter March wind. " 'Tis so cold, I can't get scarce any het in me. I'm shiverin' and shakin' like a little bird wi'out its feathers, all along I'm so close to the fire," was the chief burden of the poor old woman's discourse, " and my teeth so anguish when they joggles together. I've a heerd tell," she said, " as there were a man as lived in the woods like, near upon dirty Denford, in a sorter hole or cave as 'twere. I can't think how he done it : it must ha' been so cold & livin' like that wi'out a 'ruff' (roof) to his head ; and he went up and down for to get him his livin', asking o' them as 'ud give, and specially he begged bits o' leather, they says, and he cobbled un all together, and made himself a vesture and shoes ; there's a great big shoe o' his kept somewhere, they says, for a show."

" And what for did he do like that, granny ? " said the child.

" They say as he were one what cut off the king's head wi' a scoward,*

* The executioner of Charles I. (who was masked, and therefore not known) is reported by tradition to have lived as a hermit in a cave near the " steech."

long fur time ago, and after that he were afraid, and so he went and lived like that there. But then he mun at least ha' had some wood; can't yer grampy find a bit o' wood nowhere left?"

"There ain't anything scarce left to burn," said Cecily; "the boy'd best go out clatting."

In the utter absence of fuel in those midland counties, where coal was almost worth its weight in gold, the cakes of manure were set up against each other in the fields, dried in the wind and sun of March, and burnt in all the cottages—a word had even been invented for their production.

"It's colder this spring nor it's been all winter," shivered the old woman. "'I shan't climb up May hill' * this year anyhow. Ain't there nothing better but only them nasty clats?"

"There's the bean-haulms," said the boy, going and fetching in an armful, which just flared up and left the dull fire smouldering on with a disagreeable smell, almost as before. "I can't find a bit o' wood left in the skillen" (outhouse), added he, sorrowfully.

"You'd best go to bed, mother," said Cecily.

"It's so dull in bed," answered she, crossly. "I likes to be wi' the boy. He tells me a wonderful deal o' things, and you never tells me nothing. I never should ha' heerd as the sheep had a had three lambs, nor as there'd been a man nigh murdered, abused shameful, at Sainton, nor nothing as is nice to know, if it hadn't been along o' he. He's a wisome child he is, and I won't go to bed not till sundown," added she, angrily. "It's all because ye want to tight up the house a bit sooner as ye sends me away like that."

It was melancholy work in winter, and every one went to bed soon after dark to keep any living warmth in them. Indeed, the same thing is told of the Oxford students hardly above a couple of centuries before. Chimneys are of late invention: they only existed in great halls and kitchens even in Elizabeth's day; and the young men at college, it is recorded, had often, like Mrs. Benyam, to go to bed in order not to "perish of cold."

At that moment Benyam came in from the farmyard.

"I must take a smoke anyhow for to warm me," said the old man, going up to the dresser to fumble for some tobacco. As he did so he caught sight of some eggs hidden behind a plate, which Rupert was collecting to thread upon a string.

"What's that nasty rubbish?" said he. "I shall just toom † all that away"—and he flung them into the fire. "A wasting yer time like that with them things!"

"I blowed un when I were out shepherding, for pastime," answered the poor boy, as he flung out of the door, "and it didn't do no hurt to nobody," he cried.

* A common proverb when old people cannot live over the spring.

† "Toom," empty—WICKLIFFE.

"Ye'r so cross in yer maggots as it's enough to turn a dog sick," said his grandmother, angrily, kindling in his defence. "Going for to daunt the child, blaring on him like that, and he haven't so much as shod a tear with it!"

After her own fashion the old woman cared for the boy, and did her best for him. She instructed him in theology, natural science, and philosophy. She taught him what were lucky signs—for instance, never to turn a dumbledore (humble bee) out of the house; what were charms to make the butter come when bewitched, not to tread on a fairy ring, and to say his prayers, *i.e.* to repeat—

There are four angels round my head,
There are four postes to my bed, &c.;

and when indeed "May hill" was too much for her, and she died in the spring, Rupert felt that his best friend and protector had passed away in her. His was a dumb grief, however, and whatever Cecily might feel on the subject, she had neither the wish nor perhaps even the power to put it into words.

A few days after her burial old Simon the ratcatcher looked in, with various wonderful contrivances in wire over his shoulders, and a moving bag, which looked exceedingly uncanny, containing his ferrets; while his two sober, staid, sad-looking dogs, weighed down as it were with responsibilities of rats, followed at his heels. "I'm a goin' to Farmer Ashe's," said he, "and as I were so nigh I thought I might jist look in to ye. Any rats wanted here?" (catching understood.)

"None to-day," answered Benyam, who rather liked the old man; "but you'll ha' a few broth. Cecily'll make it ready in a minit," he said, turning to his daughter, who began to prepare a meagre mixture of bread and herbs and water.

"And Simon," said she, as she filled the wooden bowl, "if ye be a goin' to Sainton, ask Master Mayden what for he haven't a sent the calico cloth, as they did a ought to by the butter-carrier."

"What for didn't ye bring it yerself?" observed her father, angrily.

"They hadn't but about two yards, and I wanted seven. Ye haven't a got a shirt to yer back, nor the boy neither," said Cecily, shortly.

"And I don't like they new-fangled cottons. Linen were my father's wear, and linen shall be mine. Irish for gentlefolk, dowlas* for we—three ells seven shillings to the shirt 't has allays been."

"It ain't to be had now," answered Cecily, rather sharply, "so ye can't get it."

"And so yer old woman's gone at last," said Simon, looking up from his basin.

"Yes," answered Benyam, with some pride, "she died beautiful! She didn't take much account o' we that last week, but she just went on

* *Dame Quickly*—"I bought yer a dozen of shirts to your back." *Falstaff*—
"Dowlas, filthy dowlas, hostess."

as loud as ever she could wi' textes : 'Evil communication corrupts,' and such like good words, one after t'other, as fast as may be, and when she'd a done, she'd just begin all over again ! 'Twere a fine end," he added, complacently, "but 'twere very worryt, her a hollering and squealin' a' night like that, so as us couldn't scarce get our nateral rest."

" Well," said old Simon, "she were a woman as worked hard a' her days, and now she may just take her rest 'where the wicked'" (Simon, like Mrs. Benyam, was of opinion that one word out of the Bible was just as good as any other, as is the case with some other and wiser folk). " But I mun be goin'. Do ye know if the squire's at home at Thornley ? I heerd they was wonderful plagued with rats, and I thought as I might just pass and see."

" They ain't there," said the boy, who had followed the old man in, and was looking with a longing eye at the ferrets. " I see'd him a Toosday drivin' away. He were a standin' up of his 'ind legs i' the carriage a talkin' to Sam, what was a drivin' of him for to meet the coach like down at the ford."

" What do ye know about it, for to be putting in your word like that?" grumbled his grandfather, turning upon him with a sharp aside.

" I heerd as that off mare of the squire's were to be sold, she's so very shuff, but she's a very neat nag for a' that, for any one as can do her justice," observed old Simon, who had a sharp eye for all beasts.

" Ye wouldn't let me see a tiddy bit o' one of their faces, would ye, Simon ?" said the irrepressible Rupert, anxiously, braving even his grandfather, in the ardour of his interest in the ferrets.

" Well, I can't stop, not by rights," answered the old man—taking, however, one of the lithe white things, with its vicious pink eyes, out of the bag, which climbed up and down and all over him, in and out, as if it had no bones, to the boy's unspeakable delight. " 'Tis wonderful cold to be sure," Simon went on, stroking her fondly, " so as there's scarce any young rabbits, nor nothing for her to eat, poor thing. The seasons ain't a mossel what they used to was. I mind that big storm as the Missis were lost in, how the men built 'um housen in the snow just for pastime, as they got no work for weeks. Now 'tis May instead of December as is the sharp time."

" Eh, they was a deal better times, they was, then nor now. Wages is got that wonderful high as 'tis very unconvenient," said Benyam. " A penny a day I mind I used to get when I were a little lad as high as my staff, and kep' at it too. My wage growed like as I growed, but 'twere but eightpence and tenpence for full-growed men, you'll mind that. Now they thinks precious little o' fifteenpence as I pays 'um, and when there's work more nor or'nary they wants an uncommon deal," added he, sighing.

" Well, you and I'se a getting into years : I suppose it'll last our time," moralized the old ratesetter. " That's what I allays said when there were all that noise as the French was a coming. 'Twon't be not no detriment to us old uns, I says."

" I never was afeard o' the matter o' them," replied Benyam, somewhat consequentially ; " they couldn't ha' got as far as we anyhow. How ever could they ha' crossed the bruck, I'd like to know ? I've a seen they red-coats turned there scores and scores o' times. Why, 'tis fifteen feet and more across, and the bank's so steep. Nay, they'd never ha' got over there by no manner o' means. I've a stood looking at it from the planks (the bridge), and it were as plain as the blind could see it."

" Well, us lives t'other side on it, so that don't so much odds to we ; us must just chance it," said Simon, resignedly. " But I must be a going," said he, cramming the ferret back into the bag, to Rupert's infinite regret. " I wish ye all and each good mornin', and thank ye kindly.

CHAPTER III.

A PAIR OF FRIENDS.

YEARS went on, the child grew into a lad—a very handsome, dark, black-haired boy, but with the sullen expression certain to come out of that unloved life without a caress. He grew old enough to be of use in the farm, and did more and more of the work both in and out of the house ; but from neither his grandfather nor his mother came anything but the coldest and hardest of words.

One beautiful summer's day, the hay was just waiting to be cut, and the whole country smelt like a nosegay, when the boy took his food out of his stern mother's hands : the half-boiled dumpling, the lump of bread and cheese, which is the ordinary fare of our most unculinary of nations. The soft air was full of sweet scents and pleasant sounds, the hedges were a tangle of wild-roses and honeysuckle, as he went and lay down with his dinner in his hand on the edge of the hill before the wide opening view. The world as it seemed to him was all to be seen in that far-stretching plain : the broad hedgerows dotted with great elms, the sweeps of wood, the waving corn just beginning to change colour, the west wind tracing its motion over it with swift soft undulating waves, the hay-fields, the swathes falling fast before the scythes, each beyond each, forming little more than a line thus seen from the hill above, with varying shades of golden green softening into exquisite lilac and blue ; till in the far distance (they said it was five-and-thirty miles) the palest possible line of low hills, each with its story of the ancient fights, melted with the haze into the sky.

Rupert did not concern himself with all this beauty, but once at church (where he did not often trouble himself, however, to go) he had heard about the Devil showing the kingdoms of the earth, and though he did not understand, he had a sort of feeling that they must all lie in that blue plain, where he longed to go. He lay in the sunshine, but his little heart was sore and lonely. Mr. Max Müller says that ideas cannot exist without words ; and the ideas of a ——shire peasant

in an outlying hamlet in those days must have been few indeed, if his vocabulary was their limit. But though ideas may not exist, feelings and emotions can; and the vague longings after affection and sympathy of his little heart were as painful as if he could have expressed them in the best print,—perhaps more so, print lets off a great deal of steam.

A cold nose was thrust at the moment up to his cheek, and Quick, the daughter of Quick, as sensible and affectionate as her mother, was making great demonstration with her tail as she crept fondly and closely up to the boy. Benyam was rather jealous indeed of their intimacy, and always sent the dog about her business when he found her with Rupert.

"Quick, dear old Quick," said the boy, hugging her tenderly; and the meaning of the hug was, "You love me, Quick; nobody loves me but you: we love each other, don't we, Quick?" and Quick responded with much eloquence, though she too had no words for her ideas. And the boy's heart, after half an hour's unvoiced conversation, was much comforted, though the old man's stern whistle summoned the dog before they had half done what they had to say, and Quick, whose conscience was a much more active one than most human beings', went off like an arrow.

A few days after, with the assistance of his dog, Benyam took down some sheep to the butcher's, at the village of Sainton; and on the way home, as he walked along the hot dusty bit of road with a rival farmer who lived a mile or two further in the plain, they discussed the price with much heat; and when this topic was ended it was succeeded by an interminable quarrel over an invaluable remedy for the "foot-rot," which Benyam wanted to get at, and John Bathe to keep for himself. "Tis worth all the money in the King's bank it is," said he, "and I won't give it to nobody, not if it were ever so."

But Farmer Bathe "had had rather more than was good for him, and was talksey; for when a man's wet like, he'll open out like a hedgehog," as old Benyam observed complacently afterwards; and accordingly before they reached the "Gipsy's grave" he had got hold of the receipt. The pursuit, however, had been so keen that he paid no attention to Quick, who he took for granted was following at his heels. It was above half way home and excessively hot when he missed her, the old man was tired and wanted to get back, so he sent Rupert, whom he found "shepherding" in a lower field, back after the dog. The boy wandered up and down for some time without being able to see or hear anything of her, till at length he heard a tremendous noise near the horse-pond in the wide, ruinous, scattered collection of houses called the Market-place, and hurried there. A crowd of men and boys were throwing stones at a wretched half-drowned beast: a horrible doubt ran like a knife into the boy's heart; he rushed to the place—the miserable head that appeared could not be recognised, but he felt sure that it was Quick. "Ye'r wicked shaps," he screamed, "a killing our dog!"

"He's mad, he bit Jess!" cried the dancing little ruffians, enjoying the sport all the more for his rage.

"Then it's you as have drove her mad," ground Rupert through his teeth. "You did a ought to be drownded too!" And he pommelled his way through the crowd and straight into the water. A hoarse laugh was the only salute as the wretched beast, with a whine of recognition and an attempt to reach her master's outstretched hand, sank under a final stone. Wild with rage, Rupert showered blows right and left from his clenched fists, pushed one boy into the pond, knocked down another, and set off at a gallop home. It might have gone hard with him, however, for the men and boys were very angry; but the old ratcatcher passing by called out:—

"You'd best take care! Benyam will be down upon ye like the Devil and all his works for killin' of his dog." They paused for a moment and he got off unmolested.

His heart was half broken, and he sat down under a hedge as soon as he reached a quiet spot, and sobbed desperately—those dry hard sobs without a tear, which harden instead of softening one's heart—to lose the only thing that loved him, and in such a way! Then he rose up a harder and a worse boy, with revenge and wrong in his heart; the powers of good and evil, the black and white horses of the old myth, were making a struggle for his soul, and the black horse was winning.

The boy's face was the index to what was going on within. Nature had done well for him: had given him a large square forehead, a clear eye, and a firm good mouth—the power of thought in the upper part of the face, and of will in the lower; but now there was a sullen look in the brow, and a dogged expression about the chin.

CHAPTER IV.

A HUNTING MORNING.

It was a great hunting county, and to watch the horses and dogs across country was one of Rupert's chief pleasures. To rush after the hounds in full chase, and judge where there was the greatest chance of their path being cut across again, was as keen a delight to him as to the best mounted man in the field. Hunting is a really popular amusement, and nearly as much enjoyed by foot as by horsemen.

It was a beautiful day, the first burst of spring after a long frost, the pale blue sky dappled with little flecks of cloud, a bright sun and a soft wind, when Rupert reached, breathless, one of those double gates in a high unclipped hedge, which seem invented to give most trouble to man and beast, and to be of no use to either. Half the red-coats, and the dogs, had swept past him across the poachy field full of rushes,—"splash gate" leading into "swim meadow," notorious both,—when an impatient sportsman came up: a tall dark man, riding a very fine black horse; everything about him looked as first-rate as his horse, but he seemed out of humour and angry; he had taken a wrong cut, and was far behind the rest of the field.

"Open those gates, boy!" he called out imperiously. Rupert did as he was bid; but as he pushed back the second, the impatient horse in the narrow space between the two, lashed out with his hind legs, and in his haste, Rupert, in avoiding the kick, let fall the gate. It touched neither horse nor man, who was far too good a rider to be caught; but he swore a fierce oath at the lad, and turned out of his way to strike at him with his heavy-handled whip before he rode on. The boy had done his best, and almost hissed with rage and a burning sense of injustice. In a few minutes, however, he followed till all were out of sight; and he was turning slowly home, when the fox suddenly entered a great wood from which they had been keeping him carefully all the morning, and doubled back almost to the place whence he had started.

The cheery sound, which is music in the ears of gentle and simple sportsmen, was heard echoing up and down the heart of the wood, though the horsemen could not be seen as they galloped along the ridings.

Rupert had a good eye for sport, and he took up his station in a capital position, where the "spinney" ended in a steep bank on the field; the brushwood was so thick that it was hard for anything bigger than a fox to make a way on either side, but in the middle was an old clearing where a number of trees had been dragged out: the bank, however, had been made up again, and a new and solid oak post and rail fixed at the top. Rupert ensconced himself very comfortably under a neighbouring hedge, and was rewarded by the fox jumping almost into his arms, followed by the whole pack at full cry and full speed, tails in the air, black, brown, and white; it was very delightful, and not a horseman in sight to share the honour of his position, though he could hear their cries all round.

A moment after his old enemy on the black horse came hard and fast through the wood, and up to the new set fence. It was a tremendous leap, the rail was high, the bank was deep, for the ground fell very much into the field below, and there was a wide ditch full of water and leaves. Moreover, there was no good landing-place on the other side, which sloped up again, and was poachy and slippery with the stiff soil, and greasy with a thaw after a hard frost. He drew up and looked at it; it was a great temptation to go over; the hounds were running into the fox just ahead, the rest of the field far behind, and he would have had to go back a quarter of a mile at least to find gate or gap in the thick wood. At that moment the boy, seeing him hesitate, clapped his hands.

"I'm on the right side of the hedge now, and where you'd fain be," cried he.

The jeering of a boy was not likely to affect a crack rider of the —shire hounds; but perhaps it added the half-grain necessary to the strong inclination which made him resolve to go over, and he spurred his horse at the fence: the brute was wiser than his master and refused it; and again and again the rider brought him back to the leap with whip and spur. Both by this time were furiously out of temper, and at last, in a sort of cross-grained manner, the horse went over. The boy saw them in

the air for the hundredth part of a second, the very incarnation of health, and strength, and power—the next moment there lay only a huddled mass of legs and arms on the ground : the horse was down, and the rider had fallen on the wrong side, his leg crushed under the saddle, and he himself at the mercy of the hoofs. The horse scrambled up, lashing out behind him as was his wont, and hitting his master violently on the head. In another moment he was out of sight.

Awed and frightened by the silence, Rupert crept up : the rider lay motionless, and he attempted to raise the head ; the blood streamed from the mouth, and he laid it down again and ran hurriedly to look for help. The red-coats were riding rapidly on in the next field, too eager to attend to the gesticulating boy, till at last one of them, who caught sight of the riderless black horse over the hedge, found time and interest enough to listen to what he was saying.

"What, had a spill ? What is it you're saying ? not dead ? impossible ! " and he followed the lad to the spot.

"Poor fellow!—what, Ayscough, can't you speak, man ?" said the young squire, dismounting and going up to the prostrate form, and trying his best to alter the position of the body and to feel the pulse.

He had passed his arm through his horse's bridle, who, excited by the sounding halloes, and eager to press on, reared and struggled so that his master could hardly keep him from trampling on the fallen sportsman.

"Quiet, chestnut ! still, you brute !" repeated he vainly. "Is there nobody within reach but you, boy ?" said he in despair. "Can you hold the horse and fetch some one else to help carry him to the nearest house on a hurdle ?"

"Rowan and Toby's at work in the low moor," said Rupert, going off rather suddenly.

The help was long in coming. Charles Blount wetted his handkerchief in the ditch and sat trying to keep the head cool. Hounds and hunters had swept far away, and the stillness was awful to him, alone with that senseless body : there was not a creature within sight or hearing ; nothing stirred but the twittering birds, and an occasional drop falling from the twigs. He had a man's horror of sickness or death where he could not help, while he was perfectly fearless himself. And as he knelt there doing his poor little best he looked round with dismay ; he felt utterly hopeless and wretched, and his blood ran cold as he looked at what had lately been his impious cousin lying silent and motionless, the face perfectly white and streaks of blood across the light part of his clothes.

At length Rupert returned : they heisted the unconscious burden on the shoulders of the men. "Where's the nearest house ?" Charles inquired. Rupert pointed to his grandfather's on the hill, and the melancholy little procession began to move up, preceded by the boy, who had now given up the horse to its master. "You haven't ridden him ?" said the young squire, a little anxiously even at that moment. "Did he go pretty steadily ? I'm of no use here," he added, in a few minutes. "I'll

ride off for the doctor. I saw Brown in the field not half an hour back." And he mounted his horse and vanished.

The hurdle and its accompaniments went on alone. Rupert threw open the house-door and led the way into the empty parlour; it was a low stone-floored room, the windows of which were never opened, with scarcely any furniture in it: they laid the hurdle on a great table in the midst, spit in their hands, and, all in the way of business, proceeded to lift its occupant on to the great wide, hard sofa of ceremony on which no one had ever rested.

By this time the old man had heard the commotion, and came in much annoyed.

"What are ye doing, I should like to know, in other men's doors?" he said, sourly. "It's one of they random rackety hunters, is it?"

He was too stolid and stodgy to be surprised or distressed at anything so little personal to himself as the sight of a man insensible from a fall out hunting.

"Ye wouldn't have us leave a dying man upo' the ground, I take it," said one of the men. "His nag have a hot him in the 'ead; they was both down together. 'Tis an unked death, to be sure."

"And who's to be at his charges?" growled Benyam, going up and looking at the just breathing body.

"He's a friend of Sir John Blount's. You knows he?" answered one of the men consolingly, as he stood with his head on one side contemplating the occupant of the sofa like a work of art.

"Well, at all sights you needn't be cumbering here," was the savage reply. "Cecily, come here!" he called. "Where's his horse got to I'd just like to find out? Ye might just hop over and catch that, as ye want summut to do. We can mind the man. Cecily, I say, why don't ye come?"

"I'll wait till the young squire gets back again anyhow," answered one man doggedly. "Rowan, ye may go after the nag."

"Then wait outside, will ye?" said Benyam, turning them out.

"The old master's right down franzy," said the men as they left the room. The unused parlour, however, was so cold that they were far better off outside.

Meantime Rupert had rushed into the dairy after his mother, with his eager, confused description of what had happened. "And the fox turned up by the Great Sea wood into the spinney, and he fell, and the nag tospide o' him, and hot him i' the head as he lay."

"What, one of them red-coats?" said she quietly, finishing her pat of butter. "'Tis an okkard chance for we, sure; and I've plenty fer to bang about, wi'out sick men."

"Make haste," said the boy impatiently, shaking her by the gown, as she deliberately examined the kitchen cupboard for brandy and vinegar, and lingered over the fire.

"I am making haste," answered she, in a vexed tone. "Don't ye see he's sure to want hot water, and I mun fill the kettle?"

"Why, the man will be dead afore ye get nigh to him!" said he, angrily. "He've a cotched it in his 'ead, I tell ye."

By the time she reached the parlour her father had got rid of the two labourers, and had followed them out. There was no one there but the dying man as she came in with Rupert after her.

She crossed the room with the usual listless calm manner that she did everything, till she suddenly caught sight of the face on the sofa. She paused for a moment, then threw her arms over her head, and with a deep sobbing groan cast herself down upon the body.

"Oh, Rupert, speak to me, speak to me!" she moaned. In a few minutes, however, she had raised herself quickly, and was trying all sorts of remedies to bring back animation. She lifted his head up on her knees, and as each fresh trial failed, the deep sobs shook her as she cried, "Cannot ye speak one word, Rupert; can't ^{ye} sinnify as ye knows me?"

But there was neither look nor sound in answer.

When the restraints of a stern nature give way, the opening of the flood-gates is far more fearful than in softer dispositions. The boy stood by in silent wonder at her passion of grief; he obeyed all her orders, brought her in water and vinegar and brandy as she asked for them; and when everything seemed in vain, and she lay silently beside the body, he stole out of the room with the sort of feeling that he was present at a scene which he ought not to witness.

It seemed a long time before the doctor arrived at the house; but he came in at last, followed by young Blount. As none of the remedies which he applied seemed to have the slightest effect, he shook his head. "It'll all be over in a few minutes," said he; "there's hardly any pulse left."

Cecily was standing coldly and calmly by them. Every sign of emotion had vanished when she heard the strangers enter the house.

"Poor Ayscough," said Blount, coming near; "poor Rupert!"

The boy, who had followed them in, looked wonderingly round, but again the name was not addressed to him.

In a few minutes the faint signs of life had ceased, all was still, and the lad bent over the body in wondering fear. The likeness between them was curious. Cecily walked away to the window, and stood bending over a row of those strange, prickly, distorted, half-alive plants which one sees only in farmhouse windows, typical of her own death-in-life existence. The doctor looked curiously after her, but her back was turned, and not a muscle moved.

"What a blow for his poor father and mother!" said Charles, more occupied with the dead than the living. "I wonder what they'd like done with him? It's so far to Scarsfield. At all events, we will see that you have no more trouble about it than can be helped," added he to old Benyam, who had now come in.

"I've a put up the black horse; and a very fine beast 'tis," said he,

in a very different tone to what he had used to the men. "Where's the nag to be sent?" he inquired first; and secondly, "What shall ye please as we should do with the gentleman?"

"My father will send from Hartley Grange, I am sure, as soon as I can get home, for 'it,'" said Charles, with a little natural hesitation at the painful word, "and the horse too; and we're much obliged to you for all that you have done," he added, turning courteously to Cecily; but she said nothing.

They left the room, mounted their horses, and rode slowly away together.

"Did you ever see such a likeness?" said the young doctor eagerly.

"Was it?" answered Charles, laconically. "It may only have been accidental. At all events, it's no business of ours. Poor fellow! Poor Ayscough!" he repeated. "He was a sort of cousin of ours; and that beautiful property at Scarsfield, down in the north, was to come to him," he added, with a landowner's respect for the rights of succession.

"Was he an only child?" said the surgeon.

"No; but he was the eldest; and the estate has gone from Rupert to Rupert for I don't know how many generations," answered Charles, with an eldest son's contempt for cadets. "I warned him against Black Bess this morning," he went on. "She'd such a devil of a temper; she was always a savage brute; but he would ride her—she was such a one to go. He'd a will of his own at all times had poor Rupert."

"I never saw him here till this season," said the surgeon again.

"No, this was the first time he's hunted this country. He'd just sold out, and talked of settling at home. Poor fellow!"

And Charles rode slowly home to give orders about bringing away the body of his cousin to Hartley Grange, whence he had issued that morning in the highest health and spirits, the boldest rider and the best-mounted man in the field.

The boy had followed them, to bring out their horses from the shed where they had been put up. When he returned into the room where the body lay, his mother had disappeared. That evening "it" was fetched away by Sir John Blount's people.

The MS. Journal of Captain E. Thompson, B.H.
1783 to 1785.

We have before us a literary curiosity, not, indeed, of great antiquity, but having almost every other attraction to recommend it. It is a manuscript journal kept by a captain in the Royal Navy, from April 1, 1783, to March 25, 1785, and including, together with a world of home politics, literary and general gossip, a run to the coast of Africa in command of the *Grampus*, 50-gun frigate, and a considerable stay on the island of Madeira. The writer was a Captain Edward Thompson, who, when the journal opens, appears to have lived in Bedford Square, but who also resided occasionally a good deal at Mortlake, besides professional visits to Portsmouth, Plymouth, &c., and occasional excursions to friends, chiefly in the neighbourhood of London. The book was found at a cottage in Cheltenham; and another MS. book, the diary of a fashionable physician in Cheltenham in the earlier years of this century was found with it; but no connection between the books, as far as we are aware, has yet been discovered. Two thin quarto volumes, about the size of boys' copy books, formed part of the same collection. One contains copies of various letters addressed by Captain Thompson to Lords of the Admiralty, Ministers of State, and other official personages; the other is an account of the sheds and storehouses in Portsmouth dockyard and arsenal, but bears date 1828, many years after Captain Thompson's death, and must have belonged to some other person, perhaps a member of his family, who may have chosen the navy for a profession. They appear to have turned up by mere accident, having been brought to a medical gentleman of the town by a patient from the cottage. The versatility of the gifts of gossip which Captain Thompson displays is a key to the large circle of acquaintance in which he mixed. In proof of this we may say that this little book, a small octavo in brown sheepskin, of sixty-three leaves, contains anecdotes of persons of all ranks and classes, from the King and Queen down to street beggars and shoe-blacks' daughters. It is written in a clear small round hand, the ink a little faded, but almost every word legible with very little trouble. The spelling follows a standard of its own, but is consistent. We have always "pritty," "gardiner," "herbarum" for "herbarium" (twice); and Mr. Pitt's name, which frequently occurs, has almost always but one *t*, while Sheridan has always two *r*'s. In the copies of letters, however, the spelling is correct; showing that the writer was aware of a recognized standard, but in these familiar entries was careless of it. The Captain was more or less intimate with Dr. Johnson, Mr. Wilkes, Tom

Davies the actor—Johnson's friend and pet (see Bosworth *passim*), who “mouthed a sentence as curs mouth a bone”—Sir Francis Sykes, Colman, George Jackson, Lacy of Drury Lane, Dr. Walcot, and Sir George Young; was employed by Lord Keppel, First Lord in the Fox and North coalition; was consulted by, and occasionally dined with, Lord Howe; had interviews with Mr. Fox, Sir C. Jenkinson, Lords Hotham, Sydney, and Carmarthen, regarding various points of geographical and naval interest in our African and Indian dependencies, and appears to have been treated with various degrees of respect and confidence by all. The journal terminates abruptly at March 25, 1785, when the writer appears to have been again under sailing orders for Africa. We learn, on making application at the Admiralty, that he died in the following year, and that his seniority as captain dates from April 7, 1772.

It is not easy to make out clearly any facts of importance concerning the gallant writer's family. He briefly records in one entry, charged with feelings of domestic sorrow, the madness of his wife (Nov. 16, 1784), but there is no other allusion to her. He appears to have had a sister whose married name was Wright, a fragment of one of whose letters, with the date, December, 1784, is wafered into the fly-leaf of the book. Under November 18, 1784, an entry occurs “on the death of Mr. Pryme, my brother-in-law.” Under March 15, 1785, occurs the following:—“I saw my poor sister, miserable, melancholy, and lame. I endeavoured, poor sorrowful soul, to alleviate her distresses and pains.” From another entry we learn that she lived “beyond Islington.” This is, perhaps, the same “sister Wright” whose letter is preserved, dated December, 1784. It is full of gratitude for his kindness. Under October 18, 1784, occurs some lines “to my Mother,” from which it is likely she was then dead. An entry, March 17, 1785, on the “learned pig,” says:—

He now draws the attention of the beau monde—women of the first Fashion waited four hours for their turn to see him. I am much flattered in this classick pig—he was bred at Beverly, in Yorkshire—a fellow student with the Thompsons and Hothams.

Another entry shows that those families had intercourse with each other. Under date of February 27, occurs, “I visited Colonel Hotham, Lord Keppel, Sir Charles Thompson, and Sir Francis Sykes.” The next day we find—

Sir Charles Thompson called upon me: for many years I have scarce received a civility from the miserable Hothams. The Commodore was to have married a cousin of mine, now Mrs. Twaleton Thompson. She refused him, and a shylass succeeded. However, I taking Colonel Hotham's son to sea with me draws the attention of these people to me.

Several entries, of which more anon, speak of a certain “Emma,” in whose society the Captain found solace. His connection with her was evidently of a kind which the opinion of that day hardly regarded as criminal, and which its practices, as appears from a large number of anecdotes, too often sanctioned. Probably, with his wife lost to him, an

appears, by lunacy, it would have been regarded by all his friends, if we except Dr. Johnson, as perfectly venial. In one ramble during his stay on the island of Madeira (March 8) we find it noted—"my nephew Thompson was with me." Possibly this nephew may have been the person to whom pertained the book of the Portsmouth plans, &c., mentioned above, and we think it not improbable he may be identical with a certain Mr. Pearson Thompson, well known at Cheltenham a generation ago, to whom the building over the Lansdowne quarter in that town, where he had an estate, is generally ascribed. Captain Thompson appears also to have had a son. We read, November 10, 1784, "My poor boy was so ill I began to be alarmed for his life." Also elsewhere, "To Slough in Bucks to search for a rural lodge . . . Maria, Tom, and Popham with me. The joys of life are confined to a few we love;" in which he seems to be speaking of his children. *

Captain Thompson was certainly a man of some property, but had not always been so. One of the earliest entries is, "When I was poor, I dressed gay; now I am rich, I dress plain. In the first instance I courted attention—in the second, I command it." There is a semi-Johnsonian ring about this antithesis which shows what model our Captain studied. We may add, that a good deal of stilted reflection occurs in the book, which proves that he did not distinguish the faults from the virtues of the style which he copied. Shortly after this last we read, "I went from town to buy an estate at Hoddesdon, a pritty leasehold—declined the purchase, and slept at Hertford." Nearly two years later occurs the entry already given about going to Slough in Bucks. Under July 19, 1788, we find,—

I had frequent conversations with the Lord Keppel to give up to him and the Duke of Portland my interest in the borough of Keydon to Mr. R. Thompson, the brother of Bielby, on condition they gave me their interest on my return from Guinea. Bielby Thompson was, we believe, the name of the first Lord Wenlock. The writer, however, does not speak of this gentleman and his brother as though they were his own relations; the tone of the entry suggests that they were no more to him than the Duke of Portland—mere politicians who might be useful. The same remark applies to the Sir C. Thompson mentioned here, who at some time commanded a regiment. His anxiety to discount "the borough of Keydon" before he went to sea will find a ready sympathy in many patriotic bosoms on either side of the present House. This borough, within a few miles of Hull, was placed in schedule A of the Reform Bill of 1832, and appears to have been always a marketable commodity up to that time.

Many of the entries show that Captain Thompson was a strong Tory at the core. He brands Mr. Fox, December 20, 1788, as "the modern Catiline," a term familiar to the readers of the *Anti-Jacobin*, adding, "the days of Charles I. are reflected strongly in the times." Again, on the occasion of a riot among the sailors—who, thronging in from the outports, visited the Admiralty and St. James's demanding prize-money, and insulting all

officers—he adds, April 19, 1788, “ May not all these disturbances be attributed to Mr. Fox, who destroyed the systems and power of Government, and gave the dissipated the means of being factious ? ” Again, January 12, 1774, we read, “ Fellows of Gamblers like Fox and Sheridan dare presume to rule a virtuous nation.” A very early entry describes Fox’s canvass for Westminster as having “ no applause or success.” The writer adds :—“ I had a meaning to offer ”—*i.e.*, an intention to stand—“ for Westminster.” Some malcontents appear to have found out this “ meaning.” We read the next day, April 6, 1778 :—“ Mr. Wilkes proposed to me to stand for Westminster in opposition to Mr. Fox ; he (Wilkes) had the interest of Lord Grosvenour and many others.” Thompson did stand, was proposed by Lord Mahon, but found no seconder. On the 8th he says :—“ The electors of Westminster were so chagrined at this disappointment in losing an election by their own neglect that they waited on me to endeavour to make it void and false return.” By the 18th he had “ relinquished every idea of a petition to Parliament on the Westminster election ; ” adding, “ I find men very ready and forward to *roast chestnuts with my fingers !* ” Under March 5, 1785, we read :—“ Charles Fox was declared duly elected for Wt. minister ; every blackguard gave testimony to the event ; ” and March 7 :—“ Mr. Fox was drawn by the mob in his chariot from St. James’ Street to Covent Garden to be chaired—I never saw a man look so black with fear.” Under January 26, 1785 :—“ The Parliament opened, where Mr. Pitt stood a Colossus, unshook by the breeze of Clamor or of Envy.” These extracts show pretty plainly the Captain’s bias. We find the writer, after his return from Guinea, thinking of standing for Camelford, but no steps towards the object are recorded as taken. Again, under February 8 :—“ I received a message by Sir Geo. Young from some members of Mr. Pit’s interest, to know whether I would wish to come into Parliament.”

Notwithstanding Thompson’s Tory predilections, Lord Keppel, for a time Fox’s First Lord, was his official friend and patron. He no doubt regarded himself as professionally neutral in politics, and was ready to supply either party with information about the African coast, Negapatam, Guinea, for which he had an especial affection, and the Andaman Islands. It was proposed by Thompson to Lord Keppel—

To explore the coast of Africa between 20° and 30° S. L., where there was a fertile country, defended north from the Portuguese, and south from the Dutch, by high, barren, and inaccessible mountains. . . . This settlement I proposed for our Indians to call at and rest, and so come up with S.E. trade (wind), in war to avoid the enemy without returning the beaten road from the Cape, and the necessity of putting into Rio de Janario.

The account of his voyage is, on the whole, amusing. It gives a pleasing picture of society in the island of Madeira in the last century, with a romantic story of a young lady whose true love was crossed by the bars of a convent. This portion of the diary concludes, March 11, 1784, with a notice that it “ is continued in another book under the head of anecdotes ”

and remarks, and the partial descriptions of the forts and towns in Africa are inserted in the ship's journals." It is resumed on shore under the date of September 25, 1784, the first entry being, "I dined with Wilkes." Application has been made to the gentlemen who have charge of the Admiralty records, in the hope that their research might throw additional light on the writer and his doings; save, however, the date of his seniority and death, and the fact that he died in command of the *Grampus*, on the African station, no further information appears to be within their reach.

The great feature of the journal, however, consists in the profusion of verses with which it abounds. These are occasionally good, but mostly hover just below mediocrity, or barely soar up to it. Our captain seems to have always had one hand on the lyre, even if he were guiding the helm with the other. Not unfrequently his epigrams, epitaphs, and jermiads are variously fashioned and refashioned. He will not let a thought stand, as it were, on its own legs, but tries on one pair of stilts after another, and produces at last something at once pompous and lame. Then there are heaps of anecdotes from the dramatic, literary, fashionable, and scandalous gossip of the day; some of them old stories, some of them new, some of them different versions of facts known in the main from other sources. Nothing, according to the fashion of the age, was too coarse or too filthy to be set down in black and white. There are no dashes, asterisks, or inuendos, but a "spade" is called by its own name. We know precisely what sort of jokes and stories were currently relished and retailed on the quarter-deck, in the First Lord's dining-room, at the "Beef-steak Club," or in the lobbies of Covent Garden. Here are repartees picked up from beggars, and smacking strongly of the kennel; a fragment of a satire of the writer's own, called "A Carricatura Painting of London;" an epitaph on a favourite monkey; stories of the last fine lady who had run off with her footman; of the first steps of George, Prince of Wales, in systematic debauchery; Dryden's lines on the "three poets" distorted to a parody in praise of Dr. Johnson; open-mouthed anxieties about balloons—then a rage with which the public was newly inoculated; with notices of the weather, and homilies on the depravity, ingratitude, selfishness, and hypocrisy of the age; memoranda of interviews with Pitt or Fox, or their Secretaries of State; a code of signals communicated to Lord Howe; endless entanglements of Sheridan with his lessees, partners, agents, dupes, and Jews; a modest proposal that he (the Captain) should rearrange *Hamlet*, killing the king in the third act; and every here and there a skull with cross-bones sketched in the page—invariably a sign that some bad verses are not far off, commemorative of the obituary of friend or statesman—all these and a great deal more make up the *farrago libellis*. The Captain's literary pottings often crop up, queerly mixed with professional memoranda. Under April 21, 1778, we read: "I addressed Lord Keppel for the *Europa*; finished the poem of the Skull." Similarly, under March 10, 1784, we read: "The weather being in general tem-

pestuous I resolved to embarque, and in the evening commenced the poem of Bello Monte." Again, somewhere between Portugal and Madeira, the "Rock of Sintra" having been sighted a couple of days before, we find the following :—

Feb. 18.—Muggy, drizzling, foul weather. At noon passed the promontory of St. Vincent's at about twenty leagues distance. Winds which have blown at a great distance produce a great swell.

And swells have roll'd where winds have never blown.

Again—

Feb. 19.—I began to copy the poem of Woman, written fourteen years ago, and corrected by most of my friends—but such cold corrections as do no good.

24.—I rose before the sun, to contemplate his power and majesty—his beauties, genial joys, and dignity—his Colours and resplendent Glories on the left, to the west, was a sky diversified in the manner, and in all the gaudy colours of the Indian gingham. I sent for Wilson, my painter, but he was so struck at the gorgeous beauty and dignity of the scene, that he gave up every attempt to imitate it. He is a Londoner, and what made the scene more glorious and more surprising to him—I believe he had never seen the sun rise before.

After noting the capture of a "fine-feathered quail, and very fat," he proceeds to remark that—

Milton never describes the rising but the setting glory, and in that he is more short than I could have wished him.

"The sun now fallen
Beneath th' Azores, whither the prime orb," &c. &c.

This, though the nearest, is very unlike the gorgeous display. In the following lines I have but ill succeeded in the attempt to describe it.

THE RISING SUN.

in the Latitude (*sic*) of 33° 0·0 N.

As silver Day above th' horizon grew
Faint wore the lustre of the morning star
To give the Moon triumphal Entry.

The splendid simile of the "Indian gingham" does not appear to have been turned to the account which it deserved. The reader will appreciate the comic contrast of taking the latitude, and then seizing the opportunity to soar on Miltonic pinions. Was ever quarter-deck so splashed with Helicon before? How long is it since the Royal Navy has known a captain who kept a "painter," but was his own poet? He appears not to have known, or to have forgotten, *L'Allegro*, where the fine tints describing sunrise occur :—

"Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great Sun begins his state."

The journal of Captain T. never allows one to detect by any overt sign a Sunday from among the other days of the week, and he does not appear to have done the clergy the honour, as far as we can discover, to include a single member of their body among his large and miscellaneous list of visiting acquaintance. We find, however, under Feb. 10, 1785—"I took my salt fish with Geo. Colman;" this must have been Ash Wednesday.

On trying back the other days by this test we find here and there a certain strain of sedate reflection pervading the Captain, when not dining out with friends, in the Sunday jottings of his diary. Occasionally, as is, we rather think, common in journalizing, the memoranda of one day, not being punctually posted up, ran into another. But on the whole the following may be relied on as Sunday entries :—

Oct. 10, 11 (the 10th was Sunday).—Passed my time in study and contemplation—shutting out the noisy world. Peace and ease are the blessings of mortality.

Dec. 27.—The weather most severely and intensely cold. The objects of distress innumerable, and the vices and follies of the world insupportable.

Nov. 7.—I walked to Primrose Hill. I gave the Deity my thanks from that eminence for the being I bear. I could almost hate mankind, when I feel and see that all attentions and attachments are governed by Interest. No man now-a-days is courted or admired for his honour or his honesty; all attentions are produced from that we can give, or from that we can do. But what gratitude or social love can we expect from each other, when no person can find a minute to thank God for his being and the blessings he has given?

I took a walk round Kew and Richmond. The plan of the Gardens I found altered from the design of the late Capability Brown. . . . Men seek different modes of worship; to avoid every title (title?) of the Pharisee, I contrive to have my meditations in my walks. Mr. Fox met his friends at the Shakspeare—the company was tag-rag.

Such an entry as the following occurs here and there :—

Feb. 9.—1785. I walked from this wicked Sodom towards Hampstead; I met no peripatetick of the same mind. I fear the wickedness of this city is verging so fast to ruin, that, like Sodom, a few good men will not be found to save it.

Oct. 3, 1784.—I met and conversed with an old woman of 85, bent double with age, running with rheum, and shaking with palsy; she was poor and needy. I gave her a mite; but I could not prevail her to relinquish this world and wish to change it; she always said "she would wait till she was called."

April 15, 1783.—Visited two boys at Kingston School supported by me.

From May the 3rd to December the 20th, 1783, I had not the bustle and hurry of situation as in the former part of my life; for I have always found that neither my writings in politicks or morals ever converted one sinner. I therefore left off all controversial writings.

These extracts show the Captain in his more serious moods. He seems to have been a man of warm affections, generous sympathies, and moral instincts, mostly sound, although with some exceptions, and not without some spice of religious feeling. The age was one of that disbelief in elevated goodness which is too often found where examples of it are practically rare. Such a moral standard as was supposed attainable was dissociated from religion; and bare moral goodness was only swallowed by society *cum grano salis*, i.e., of vice. A man who should seek to set up Christian duty as his standard was written down a hypocrite. It was the current theory of life, that openness of heart and kindness of nature were always found alloyed with looseness of practice in some point or other of morals, and that a conscientious profession of high principle was so seldom real that it might be neglected as a mere *rara avis in terris*, and the professor rated with almost a moral certainty as an impostor. It was, in

short, the view implied in the "Charles" and "Joseph Surface" of the most popular dramatist of the day. Rakish profligacy took large credit for its random good nature and open-handed dash, and any sort of strictness was debited with secret vice. Men had not the courage to believe in human nature at its best, or that the generous and the feeling could also be pure. Such exceptional cases as Dr. Johnson, or in the earlier part of the century, Colonel Gardiner, were uninfluential. Nay, they partly confirmed the view that every man will take his fling, for they in early life had each had theirs. Society drew the inference that a man who did not live by appetite—with intellect, of course, if he had it, but still by appetite on the whole—was a poor creature, cold of heart, and thin of blood, sinking below the animal which man at his normal condition is, not rising above it; and that, if he professed not to be such, he was a monstrously deep knave. The theory reigned, on the whole, from the Restoration to the Regency—from Congreve to Ryton, and led men who were sensitive to opinion to abandon all religious profession, in order, as Captain Thompson has it, "to avoid every tittle of the Pharisee." That he was not untinged by the social depravity of the age is what we might expect, even if his own pages did not furnish the evidence which we are about to quote. But as far as we can judge, his indignation at the ignoble vices which flourished around him was genuine, and he would not himself have been guilty of a mean, false, or dastardly action. He was evidently a highly sociable man, and kept up acquaintance with many, as with John Wilkes and George Colman, for the sake of the wit and polish of their conversation and manners, whose private lives he sincerely detested. Speaking of the former, he quotes on one occasion the dictum of a friend—"Burnaby Green used to say I should always be with him to curb his blasphemy and—". Here follows then the worst that we know of our Captain, *habemus confitentem reum.*

Sept. 30, 1783.—My time has been spent here (Plymouth) with the faithful and affectionate Emma in a placid state of ease. I have devoted myself to my family, and recreated myself with them several times, shooting and fishing on the beautifull and romantick banks of the Tavy.

Jan. 4, 1784.—I embarked, and my dear Emma departed for London. We have now been inseparable 20 months, and in that time not a word ever pass'd of a crude or harsh nature; we always met with rapture and parted with regret.

Jan. 14.—I went to Lip-hook and met my dear Emma, whose company is alone the most pleasing amusement of my soul.

Feb. 5.—I went with my Emma to Lippheest, and parted; alas, parted! perhaps for ever.

The following, dated the 14th of the same month, is the second stanza of what the Captain calls,—

THE TAVY, A SONNET TO EMMA.

On thy stream delighted, straying
Trots I've lured with treacherous art;
But with them while careles playing
Love and Emma caught my heart.

We hear no more of Emma till, on his return in the summer of 1784 from West Africa, the following occurs under date of October 7:—

Returned to Mortlake with the tender Emma, to avoid the importunities of the world, and shun its follies and madness. A nephew of Emma's was named by me Andrew Marvell; when he comes to reason the name may inspire him to be virtuous.

The following retrospect sums up the year 1784, dated December 81:—

Farewell old year; thou hast been to me diversified with pains and health, sweets and bitters, sea and land, home and foreign; but upon the whole, a more pleasing year than most. In February I left England, and visited the Maderia and Canary Isles—all Africa to St. Thomas, and returned in better health in July than I went out with. At Mortlake I passed the autumn with my favourite Emma, as much in Elysium as this world can approach it. The winter I have ended in town, as far as the termination of the year, but without ever visiting one publick exhibition.

This is the last entry relating to the person with whom Captain Thompson found solace for the loss, through lunacy, of his wife's society. Of the latter, save the three words, "my wife mad," the diary yields no trace. This too is probably in accordance with the manners of the age. The old régime as regards lunatics, even when not, as it too frequently was, barbarous and cruel, let them simply drop out of existence as objects not to be cared for beyond the fact of their safe custody. Accordingly, although there are several mentions of visits to a sister, apparently afflicted with some incurable malady, we find no entry of any visit paid to his wife.

Captain Thompson seems to have dabbled a good deal in literature. Besides the poem "On a Skull," and the poem of "Woman," before-mentioned, we find him on the evening of his embarkation from Madeira commencing the poem of "Bello Monte." This he appears to have completed, as we find under December 10, 1784:—"I gave Burnaby Green 'Bello Monte' for his opinion, and also Davies. I suppose the criticisms will be as long as from Berkshire to Reading." This Burnaby Green, as appears from another entry, was a scholarly person who had come into a large fortune, and then lost it all, save 800*l.* a year, in a brewing concern at Pimlico.

Here are a few lines from a design of a satire, called, "A Caricatura Painting of London."

Now, Lady City, take your formal chair,
While I my pallet and my brush prepare—

* * * *

Now Siddon's rant revives again in our ears,
Now the Italian scrambles through the spheres,

* * * *

Pinetti fascinates the softer sex,
And Blanchard makes them try to break their necks;
We've chang'd for honour and domestick graces,
Men with false hearts and w'omen with false faces.

Shortly before this, the writer sets down: "Began my sketches of characters;" and shortly afterwards, "wrote a scene of the follies of the day;" but there is no reason to think either more than a whim of the

moment, or that the writer had either power or resoluteness for a sustained effort much above the level of doggerel. He was liable to slight secretions of rhyme when roused and stirred by any unusual vagaries of the public taste, or when a return to London after the quiet shades of Mortlake made him feel the contrast of town manners an offensive glare. But although some other works, or projected works, of more pretension are alluded to, we take it the Captain was greatest at what his friend, Dr. Johnson, said Milton could not do, " chipping heads upon cherry-stones." We will string together a few of the better executed. The first is on a Mr. Russell, who bequeathed a hundred pounds for an epitaph : " I have given him," says our Captain, " the following one : "—

Why all this pomp, parade, and funeral bustle ?
It ne'er was wish'd by modest Master Russell.
He, when alive, was owned the man of men,
He forc'd applauses from the poet's pen ;
Honest and good he was as well as wise,
He fed the hungry, dried the widow's eys ;
His charities require no poet's puff—
For one cool hundred you have lies enough.

The next is, " To the Memory of my Half-brother, Christopher Prysme, of Hull, Brasier."

Here lies Christopher Prysme the tinker,
A great spouter, and a free-thinker.

Again, on " Lord Kelly, who was a great Drinker,"

Within this vault lies our Lord Kelly,
Who made a cellar of his belly.

His habit seems to have been, on noticing the death of some public man or old comrade mentioned in some public print, to have felt the occasion, especially if the name admitted of an easy pun, at once a call upon his pen. Accordingly he occasionally perpetrates an " epitaph " on some one who he finds afterwards is still in the land of the living. Thus on Sir Thomas Pye, after half-a-dozen lines beginning, " Can this good Pye to death's deep oven go," he records, " I called upon him and found him in health, life, and spirits." The Captain's verses on the whole are twaddly. Like damp squibs, they sputter feebly and explode imperfectly; but he has always got another ready to let off. He evidently valued himself on his wit, and records accordingly jokes of his own with the effect which they had on the company. One such example is given below, in a string of naval anecdotes.

He appears to have contributed to the *Morning Post* occasional short pieces under the signature of N. None of these, however, are worth recalling. The book is valuable as showing many phases of life and manner which have passed away, and those called from the observation of a man who had a wide range of acquaintance, and who jots down things just as they crossed his line of vision. We seem to stand at his point of view, and to partake of his experiences. It necessarily reproduces coarser

tints of profligacy and broader shadows of vice than we are accustomed to see falling across our daylight now, and lets us into things which we should never suspect to have existed from the respectably pedantic narrative of Boswell, or the polished epistles of Horace Walpole. Thus, in an epitaph on one Forest, the secretary of the "Beefsteak Club," not worth quoting, we have, in a foot-note appended, the following trait of club manners in those days, coming down apparently from the period of the "Boy Bishop" and the "Abbot of Misrule":—

The president of this club, in some burlesque, wears a mitre and chants a grace. When the members drink their punch, they have a method of alternately striking their glasses on the table.

A scandalous story was current, about the close of the year 1784, of a living lady of illustrious connections, but probably mad if the story had any foundation, having been found in the coffin which contained the body of her husband. We have about half-a-dozen versions of an "epitaph" or "epigram," which shall not be quoted, on this theme. The writer, however, remarks:—

Dec. 15.—I imagined a new humorous print of love in a coffin, and gave it to Humphreys for public notice.

On New Year's Day, 1785, he continues:—

The print of "Love in a Coffin" was published to-day. The family hath taken much pains to suppress everything on this subject. Lord Sackville took home his culprit truant daughter. I know no satire nor chastisement so severe against vice in people of fashion as prints, for which I designed the above on Mrs. Herbert.

The following is a reminiscence of a character from Ben Jonson's *Alchemist*, which has probably not revisited the stage since the writer's period:—

Had we seen Abel Drugger in real life, and as well and truly painted as by our best comedians, would he have excited our laughter? No. We only admire the character as play'd by Garrick, who, with all his wit, sense, and knowledge, could sink into so simple a lout.

Then there are anecdotes of Captain Cook and Petersgill (the *Voyages* of the former were then a recent publication), who both, as Mr. Jackson, a friend of the writer's, averred, "were footboys in his and father's families;" of Mrs. Bellamy, the actress, who "played Juliet thirty-two nights against Mrs. Cibber and Garrick," and who wrote her own memoirs. "Her general character," the writer remarks, "has been that of a Bacchant, for the Scotch said of her, 'they could not tell what sort of a character to fix upon her, for they always found her at prayers or drunk.'" We hear, too, of Admiral Sir Thos. Frankland, "very like Oliver Cromwell, of whom he was descended," who took some rich Spaniards (i.e., Spanish ships), and was famed afterwards for his usury; "but the member for Thirsk would not attend Parliament on account of the putrid members that composed it, and I knew him," the writer adds, "to be equal to the worst of them." The opinion of Lord Mansfield, in conversation, is recorded that "Lord Geo. Gordon, of 'No-Popery' fame, was more wicked than

mad ; and it was to be lamented he had not been hanged ten years ago." The following is curious, the more so as the authority at first sight appears good :—

Mr. Wilson waited upon me to relate a most extraordinary anecdote, and from the first personages of Buckingham House, for he was ever held in high estimation by them for his probity and ability as well as honour, and in the life of the D. York, he was his private secretary. A man of considerable importance is arrived from America with the copy of a letter and address from Gen. Washington, the majority of the army, and the 13 provinces. This paper early in the American War, when the French under the Marquis *De Foyes* was pushed for situation, was presented by this person to *Lord North* with positive instructions to wait but 48 hours for an answer. Three weeks elapsed and he was obliged to return without any, and then America threw herself into the arms of France. His M. says this paper was never given to him nor laid before Council. Mr. Pitt is in possession of it, and on it an impeachment is intended against Lord North.

The anonymousness of the " person of considerable importance " here mentioned, the silence concerning the contents of the " letter and address," and the fact that Lord North was not impeached, throw a cloud over the authenticity of this " most extraordinary anecdote " which no other facts, so far as we know, dispel. Further, if the Mr. Wilson in question was the same as Mr. Ben Wilson, to whom we shall have further occasion to refer, there will perhaps be found reason to distrust his unconfirmed authority. It may be granted as probable that some such paper was shown and talked about, but that on examination it was found illusory as any ground of further proceeding. If Mr. Wilson had a *canard* in his keeping, he might think it well to fly it at such a gossip-monger as Captain Thompson evidently was. The matter, however, is worth setting down.

The following anecdote of polite society, as illustrated by Lord Sandwich's musical parties, is amusing :—

His Lordship has an easy method of procuring his musick. The rule was, that all performers who were paid for their labour and journey eat with the servants, but those who preferred my lord's table had also the choice of beds as they arrived and were made his convivial companions. Few gave up the drawing-room for the dripping-pan.

The following refers to Macklin, a popular actor of the day, best known perhaps by his playing Shylock, in which part Bell's *Shakespeare*, to which Captain Thompson it elsewhere appears subscribed, gave his portrait as a frontispiece to *The Merchant of Venice*. The visitors to the National Portrait Gallery may remember a group there representing him performing the same part in private before Lord Mansfield :—

In 1744 Macklin was a principal in the theatre at Portsmouth, where they picked up Tom Davies, the author. One night the performance was interrupted by two lieutenants, *Wager* and *Norris*, and while Macklin and Marshall were on the stage they were attacked by them with swords. Marshall defended himself gallantly, and Macklin seizing a truncheon so belaboured Norris that he gained a complete victory. This so incensed the fleet, the house was shut up till they begg'd pardon of the sea-officers. Macklin met at the Coffee house and made an elegant and sensible apology for himself, but as for his friend Marshall he could say little of a pacifick nature, for all the answer he could obtain was, He should wear his sword and stick, and defend

himself where he met his foe—"but, gentlemen, I assure you he is called crack-brained Marshall." The apology was received and the House opened, but Marshall would hear no terms, but insisted on it that he came into the town with his sword on. The preliminaries were granted, and these two officers, beaten by the *Dramatis persona*, proved to be afterwards Sir John Norris and Sir Charles Wager.

We pass on to the *Johnsoniana* of this volume, not adding anything of first-rate interest to our already full-length acquaintance with "the Sage," but still worthy of a few remarks in connection with certain well-established passages in his later life. Captain Thompson's acquaintance with him seems to have been of recent formation when the journal first mentions him, and was, we may probably conjecture, owing to Tom Davies, mentioned several times by Boswell, who was a common friend to the two. We will string these notices together as they occur, or nearly so. The first occurrence of his name is on November 15, 1784, when Captain Thompson had returned from the *solas cum sola* fascinations of "Emma" and Mortlake to spend the winter in town.

It was told me to-day by unquestionable authority that Dr. Johnson, in consequence of his ill-health, had desired the Chancellor *Thurlow* to petition the Council for an addition of 200*l.* a year to his salary for 4 years, to enable him to visit the south of France for his health. The answer by the Chancellor was, that if it was but 20*l.*, the poverty of the State could not afford it. But *Thurlow* added, who is no more famed for charity than courtesy, that he might make him his banker and draw for 500*l.* This Dr. Johnson nobly and generously refused. I waited on his common friend, Tom Davies, who confirmed the above.

21st.—Dr. Johnson sent to thank me for my offer of pecuniary assistance, and when Davies told him, he said "that he never before heard of such generosity."

29th.—I waited on poor Dr. Johnson, whom I found but very indifferent in health and spirits. Nay his legs were much swelled, which threatened more than I dare describe.

Dec. 1.—*T. Davies* was to-day with *Dr. Johnson*, and while *Dr. Brocklesby* was present. At this time *Mr. Stevens* came up without sending in his name, when Dr. J. emphatically said, "Don't leave me, I will not trust myself with this flagitious man."

5th.—Alas ! I received an unfavourable report of *Dr. Johnson's* indisposition. *Crookshank* scarified his legs. Davies said to me he seem'd to increase his fears as the King of Terrors approached him. He only said "be a good Christian."

10th.—I called on Dr. Johnson to-day. He was no better.

14th.—Alas ! the miserable tidings are come, and the dissolution of Dr. Johnson. I called on him on Sunday, but found he was so restless with pain that he could not lie or sit, and withall fearfull of his approaching end. With him fell the pride, the ornament of this country, the first man in mental powers, and the purest in Christian faith and practise. He was the first moral philosopher in Europe, and a man of the strongest abilities, natural and acquired.

15th.—I visited *T. Davies*, the friend of *Dr. Johnson*, and I found *Sir J. Reynolds* was the executor and director of his posthumous matters. We have discovered but 2,000*l.* in the 3 per cents., and Davies values his library at only 30*l.* He says he was indifferent about books, as to their editions.

This negotiation for an increase of Dr. Johnson's pension came to an unsuccessful close in August 1784, while both he and Captain Thompson were out of town. Johnson arrived in London, as we learn from Boswell, the day after the first date of the preceding entries. It appears from Boswell, on Johnson's own authority, that Dr. Brocklesby, one of his

medical attendants, had likewise offered Johnson a hundred a year for his life. The Captain, as above, records a similar offer from himself. We do not doubt that there were others, or at any rate would have been, had it not by this time become known that Johnson steadfastly declined such extraordinary obligations. His physicians and surgeon, however, refused any fees for their attendance. The latter, mentioned in one of the above extracts, is called "Cruikshank" by Boswell, who records, in reference probably to the operation there mentioned, that Johnson himself seconded his surgeon's efforts "by making incisions in his body with his own hand," and "with his usual resolute defiance of pain, cut deep when he thought that the latter had done it too tenderly. The total of Johnson's property, as stated by Boswell, who cites his will, agrees nearly enough with Thompson's estimate of 2,000*l.*; but only 1,000*l.* was in the three per cents. We should infer from the above dates that Thompson knew Dr. Johnson before the period at which the journal commences. If his introduction to so remarkable a man had taken place during the first few months of it, before his appointment to and voyage in the *Grampus*, we should certainly have had some mention of it. And on Johnson's return to town in his last illness, we find our Captain under circumstances which bespeak some degree of friendly acquaintance.

The books which Davies appears to have valued at thirty pounds, realized (Boswell, note) two-hundred and forty-seven pounds nine shillings. They probably fetched, as Boswell intimates, a "fancy" price, "many people being desirous to have a book which had belonged to Dr. Johnson." Their intrinsic value may probably not have been above the lower estimate. We continue the extracts:—

Dec. 19.—I saw some of Dr. Johnson's friends, it was agreed on, as I had no invitation, that I should not go to the burying, which is ordered to be in Westminster Abbey at eleven to-morrow in the morning. I find that Dr. J. and Sir Jos. Reynolds had some harsh words, just before he died. Sir Jos. got the Chancellor Thurlow's letter from him, and by showing it about it got into the public prints, which offended this good, great man. Before he died he made the deaf Knight of the Brush make him 3 promises that, "He forgave him thirty pounds he owed him; that he did not paint on the Sabbath; and that he always read the Scriptures upon that day."

Boswell knows nothing of the "harsh words" aforesaid, nor mentions the publication of the letter of Lord Thurlow. He does mention that Reynolds took a copy of Johnson's reply and "showed it to some of his friends," by which means "it found its way into the newspapers and magazines." This perhaps is the fact of which Thompson's anecdote as above is a slight distortion. The publication of either letter would have substantially the same effect, and Johnson was entitled to resent, and probably did resent, if he knew it, such divulging of private matters.

Dec. 27.—No man was so hurt as Murphy at not being mentioned by Dr. Johnson in his will.

This probably refers to some bequests of books made by Johnson to certain friends. Boswell mentions the fact that the omission of the

names of many of his best friends among those to whom books were left and of Murphy's among others, occasioned some remark at the time, and accounts for the fact by Johnson's probable failure of memory as vital power declined, or that he might have shown the persons in question "such previous proofs of his regard, that it was not necessary to crowd his will with their names." The following anecdote of the funeral, although recorded later (January 20, 1785), will not be out of place here:—

The burial of *Dr. Johnson* was attended with a whimsical circumstance. Just as the procession was going to advance into the *Abbey*, *Sir J. Banks* was heard to be very clamorous, having no scarf, and in the honorary post of poll-bearer. It was discovered *Dr. Brocklesby* had one, and unentitled; so the undertaker strip'd him, and soddacked *Sir Joseph*. The master of the mortuary ceremonies, seeing *Mr. Colman* the last of the poll-bearers, moved him up gradation from the last to the first, apologizing at the same time to him, that he placed him first, as he was so small he would not be seen behind.

Here follows Wilkes' estimate of Johnson, which sounds very genuine as an anecdote, and expresses a view which has found extensive acceptance:—

Dec. 24.—I saw Wilkes to-day at his house in Prince's Court. He immediately began on the panegyrics of Dr. Johnson.—“The papers call him a good Christian and the luminary of learning; as for his faith, the man would believe anything that believed in the Cock Lane ghost; and who can deserve the title of the luminary of learning, that spoil'd the English language?” This is witty and pointed, but does not effect the character of Dr. Johnson.

Thompson was no doubt quite right that a character for a high, perhaps the highest current, degree of learning is not inconsistent with a false literary style; nay, rather that those very faults, though Thompson of course could not see them, which were the ground of Wilkes' remark arose from the extent to which the weight of dead language had overlaid Johnson's great native vigour of expression. The happy remarks of Lord Macaulay on his two styles, and his occasional translation from one of them into the other, will occur to most readers. It should, however, be borne in mind that nearly all persons who write much have a more familiar style and a more formal one. The distinction between the sock and the buskin is inherent in human nature. But Johnson's buskins were as high as ordinary stilts.

As regards Johnson's belief in the supernatural, it is by no means true that he gave an unreasoning acquiescence to any such stories. For instance, in a conversation recorded "by Boswell (vol. iii., p. 321, ed. 1807,) on a ghost story believed by John Wesley, that an apparition had directed "application to be made to an attorney, at the same time saying that the attorney would do nothing, which proved to be a fact," the conversation, which was with Miss Seward, runs as follows:—

"This (says John Wesley) is a proof that a ghost knows our thoughts. Now (laughing) it is not necessary to know our thoughts to tell that an attorney will sometimes do nothing. Charles Wesley, who is a more stationary man, does not believe

the story. I am sorry that John did not take more pains to inquire into the evidence for it." *Miss Seward* (with an incredulous smile) : "What, sir, about a ghost?" *Johnson* (with solemn vehemence) : "Yes, madam; this is a question which, after five thousand years, is yet undecided; a question, whether in theology or philosophy, one of the most important that can come before the human understanding."

It is worth while to add that *Johnson* did *not* believe in the now notorious imposture of Cock Lane; and it is a remarkable instance of the pertinacity of ill-nature common among mankind that the caricature drawn by Churchill of *Johnson*, under the name of Pomposo, imputing such belief to him, should have stuck to his memory in spite of the best contemporary evidence to the contrary. The belief in the "ghost" having become popular, *Johnson* did his best in assisting the exposure of it, and the proceedings in which, with that view, he bore a part are open to no reflection on the score of credulity, save from such as prejudge beforehand the question by deciding that all spiritual visitations are impossible. No doubt the detail of those proceedings, when contrasted with the breakdown of the story which they brought about, is ludicrous. But from the point of view of an investigator wishing to disabuse the public mind of a mischievous superstition, it is not easy to say what other course should have been taken, or what course, if taken, would not have had a similarly ludicrous effect. Of course *Johnson* might conceivably have sided with those who ridiculed the whole matter *ab initio*, as unworthy of a moment's serious thought. But such a course would have convinced none of the dupes, of whom *Boswell* intimates there were many, if it had not rather served to root them in their belief. To test the evidence and show its untrustworthiness, seems on such occasions a wiser and more humane course, considering the tendency of the human mind, than to reject all evidence as inadmissible on such a question, and to dismiss the notion itself as antecedently absurd. Against such a theory *Johnson*, as seen from the conversation extracted above, thought it right to protest. It was with him a question of evidence in each individual case. On the general question he only says, "It is as yet undecided,"—a much wiser and more cautious conclusion, surely, than that of those who condemn him for not rejecting at once the supposition that evidence in such a case could possibly be worth investigating.

This point is worth dwelling upon, because Lord Macaulay, in a passage to which allusion has already been made, says of *Johnson*, "He began to be credulous precisely at the point where the most credulous people begin to be sceptical. . . . He related with a grave face how old Mr. Cave, of St. John's Gate, saw a ghost, and how this ghost was something of a shadowy being." Now let the reader turn to the passage in *Boswell* on which this is founded (vol. ii., p. 181).

"Talking of ghosts, he said he knew one friend, who was an honest man and a sensible man, who told him he had seen a ghost; old Mr. Edward Cave, the printer at St. John's Gate. He said Mr. Cave did not like to talk of it, and seemed to be in a great horror whenever it was mentioned. *Boswell*: "Pray, sir, what did he say was the appearance?" *Johnson*: "Why, sir, something of a shadowy being."

Thus it comes out that, whereas Lord Macaulay puts the story on the shoulders of Johnson, all he stated was that Mr. Cave "told him" so. Not only the way in which the anecdote is introduced by Boswell, at second hand, but the sequel of the remarks, and the answer elicited by Boswell's inquiries, make it rest so unmistakeably on the authority of Cave that the noble critic's error here is the less pardonable. We can fancy the indignant asperity with which Lord Macaulay would have pounced upon and exposed such a confusion of evidence in Southey or Croker, or any writer to whom he was antipathetic! He repeats the vulgar clamour of Wilkes and the scoffers, and adds to it other misstatements of his own. Thus, as regards the Cock Lane ghost story, in connection with the passage above quoted regarding John Wesley, he says, "Johnson went himself on a ghost hunt to Cock Lane, and was angry with John Wesley for not following up another scent of the same kind with proper spirit and perseverance." As we found in the story about Cave the *suppressio veri*, so here we have the *suggestio falsi*. So far as a "hunt" implies an expectation of finding the game, the word is inapplicable to Johnson's Cock Lane errand. He went with the opposite expectation, if with any. The last quoted words further imply that John Wesley pooh-pooh'd the story, but that Johnson thought there was reason to regard it seriously, and that Wesley might have found that reason had he sought it. What could be more completely opposite to the fact? The fact was, as shown in the extract given above, that *John Wesley believed the story*, and that *Johnson thought him credulous* as believing without duly examining the evidence. Lord Macaulay does not, indeed, say, but suggests that Johnson blamed Wesley for erring on the side of incredulity; the fact was Johnson thought Wesley erred on the side of credulity; whilst of "anger" on Johnson's part there is nothing to suggest a suspicion; or rather, the whole tone of his remarks, as given by Boswell, is one of good-humoured raillery. It is merely a rhetorical amplification of the critic's own. "I am sorry John did not take more pains to inquire," is distorted into "Johnson was angry." By a succession of little ingenious twists the tale is made to bear exactly the opposite complexion to the natural one; and the difference which at last results is just that which exists between the curve and the straight line which touches it at a single point only. The unhappy passion for climax and antithesis often thus leads this polished writer to sacrifice truth to point. He wrote with that rhetorical love for a consummate contrast which is hardly consistent with the task of the historical critic. He is continually either arraying a hero in wings and glory, or tarring and feathering some *bête noire*. Thus he gilds Dutch William, and thus he bedaubs Dr. Johnson. Political biography was for him a chessboard of alternate black squares and white. Given the political opinions of his subject, you may always tell beforehand which line he will take. And then, the edifying indignation with which he pursues similar ingenious distortions of historical fact in others! However, he only treated Johnson as Johnson, on perceiving that he was

"a vile Whig, sir," would undoubtedly have treated him ; and did, in fact, treat Milton.

To return, however, from Lord Macaulay to Captain Thompson. A Mr. Ben Wilson comes in as authority for the two next anecdotes, who, to judge from the zeal for royalty which the former of them shows, was probably the same "Mr. Wilson" mentioned in a previous one as having been private secretary to the Duke of York, and whom we shall not probably be far wrong in ranking as a gossip-monger.

Dec. 19.—Ben Wilson took much pains to say that it was his Majesty's intention he (Johnson) should be relieved, but the Chancellor was so hasty and impetuous that he marr'd the good royal intention. I silenced Wilson by saying, "Did it become the King of Great Britain to consider fourteen days whether his council should relieve him, when he might have done it by putting his hand in his pocket ? Say no more in defence of royal munificence, when I did it myself, though a mean subject, the moment I heard of the good man's distress."

Captain Thompson obviously intends that it was antithetically the "subject" who was in fact "munificent," and the monarch who was in fact "mean;" but we have no doubt that it "silenced" the royal advocate ; although the implied argument that a king can or ought to do any act of kindness which any subject can or ought to do, is of course fallacious. The next is as follows :—

Mr. Ben Wilson told me an anecdote this day, which could but be told by him. He said that Lord Chesterfield had been acquainted with Johnson long before the acting of *Irene* in 1749, but that he had never done anything for him ; that J. used to wait for hours in his hall with the servants in a disregarded state. On the appearance of *Irene* he asked his lordship to protect it, and he refused him. This wearied out J.'s patience, and he wrote his lordship a long, pointed, and severe letter ; so much so, that his lordship was much agitated on the perusal of it ; and Wilson and Sir Thomas Robinson being present, after discussing its matter, it was agreed that they should wait on J., to soften his resentment in the best manner they could. They found him in his lodgings, and so small a room that there was but room for a stool, on which he sat the rest of the room being covered with books. He received them sitting, and Sir Thomas began with a tedious preface of his virtues and abilities, and of Lord Chesterfield's inclination to serve him ; adding, if I were a man of fortune I would give you 500*l.* directly. "Sir," says Johnson, "if you or any other man made me such an offer, I would kick him downstairs." Sir Thomas wished to parry this by an awkward pleasantry, "that he should like to be kick'd up for such a sum." This not succeeding with the Stoick, he told him if he would put his name to his dictionary, his lordship would give him a handsome sum of money, and Johnson made no reply.

Now we have little difficulty in coming to the conclusion that the whole of the above is an ingenious distortion of the facts relating to the celebrated letter addressed by Johnson to Lord Chesterfield when the *Dictionary* was coming out, and dated in 1755 (*Boswell*, vol. i. p. 288, folio). *Irene* was brought out by Garrick six years before, in 1749. Had such a letter, "long, pointed, and severe," been written then, Johnson would not have gone on expecting, as it seems he did, help and countenance from Lord Chesterfield. "Sir," he said to Boswell (p. 285), "after making great professions, he had for many years taken no notice

of me. But when my dictionary was coming out, he fell a scribbling in *The World* about it. Upon which I wrote him a letter expressed in civil terms, but such as might show him that I did not mind what he said or wrote, and that I had done with him."

This relates to the real letter written in 1755, and unless we are prepared to reject its date, which is part of the letter itself, its tenor, and all the circumstances in connection with it, it must be held as excluding the possibility of any such letter as that described by Ben Wilson having been written in 1749. The "great professions" to which Johnson refers were probably the countenance given by Lord Chesterfield to the "plan" of the Dictionary when addressed by him to Lord Chesterfield in 1747 (*ib. p. 161*). The words "he had *for many years* taken no notice of me" are inconsistent with any such rupture of the relations of expectancy as Ben Wilson's supposed letter would force us to conclude took place only two years later. Above all, such a letter from himself in 1749 is inconsistent with Johnson's further statement to Boswell (*ib. p. 282-3*), "that there never was any particular incident which produced a quarrel between Lord Chesterfield and him, but that his lordship's continued neglect was the reason why he resolved to have no connection with him." He must have known that such a previous letter from himself, had it been written, was precisely such a "particular incident." The only remaining supposition is that the real letter belongs to the year 1749, that Boswell misdates it, and that Wilson corrects him. But the allusion to the death of his wife, which one of its paragraphs contains, procludes this, for she lived till 1752. The behaviour imputed to Lord Chesterfield of sending an embassy to propitiate Johnson *after* such a letter is equally impossible for us to accept, and is the greatest contrast possible to the careful silence and studied indifference with which he treated the real letter in 1755 (*ib. p. 240-1*). Above all, it is inconceivable that Lord Chesterfield should have written in *The World* two letters full of propitiatory blandishments when the Dictionary was coming out, if his advances on receiving the "plan" of that work in 1747 had been rudely snubbed in 1749. The real story was thirty years old when Thompson received the anecdote from Wilson. The latter had had time to forget the circumstances, if he had heard them at the time, and to dress up the fact of the authentic letter in new ones, which perhaps he thought flattered his own self-importance. Above all, there is no proof that he ever told the story before Johnson was dead. But unless his passion for fiction had become so morbid that he failed to distinguish truth from falsehood, it would seem likely that he was sent with some overture from Lord Chesterfield to Johnson, in connection perhaps with the former's letters in *The World*, having for its object the fishing for a dedication of the Dictionary. The difficulty then remains of the total silence of Johnson about any such facts in his communications with Boswell. Those communications seem to have been very full, and Johnson seems to have been proud of the part he had played. Is it likely he would have forgotten the fact, or failed to mention it, if he had thus received and snubbed

in person a brace of envoys from Lord Chesterfield? We think the negative argument here overweighs the probability that there was even the grain of truth we have just been supposing possible in Ben Wilson's anecdote; and we incline to class his statement with that of George IV., that he had led a charge of cavalry in person at Waterloo.

The last mention of Dr. Johnson in this diary, occurs within a page of its close, under the date of March 19th, 1785, the entry relating to a dinner with Sir Francis Sykes.

The Hon. Miss Moncton was here, a modern Sappho with less success in a Phaon than the lamentor of Mytilene. She talked of her blue-stocking club of philosophers and has attempted to be a wit over wise men. Dr. Johnson used to frequent her Sabbath orgies. I could discover nothing in her but a passion for monkeys. She was an impudent, saucy, bold woman of fashion, that said everything loud more modest women would have suppressed.

In illustration of this, a paragraph from Boswell (IV. 114) shall be extracted:—

Johnson was prevailed on to come sometimes into these circles, and did not think himself too grave even for the lively Miss Monckton (now Countess of Corke) who used to have the finest *bit of blue* at the house of her mother Lady Galway. Her vivacity enchanted the sage, and they used to talk together with all imaginable ease. A singular instance happened one evening, when she insisted that some of Stegne's writings were very pathetick. Johnson bluntly denied it. "I am sure, (said she) they have affected me." "Why, (said Johnson smiling and rolling himself about) that is because, dearest, you're a duncé." When she sometime afterwards mentioned this to him he said, with equal truth and politeness, "Madam, if I had thought so, I certainly should not have said it."

It appears to have been at the same house that Boswell, having previously taken at the Duke of Montrose's, in Johnson's company, more wine than was good for him, behaved with the offensive impertinence which he himself duly records, together with a copy of verses in which, when the next day brought penitence, he besought the lady's pardon. One anecdote has been run over, but as nothing depends on its date, it may as well come here. It is one given rather differently by Boswell:—

Maclin (Macklin, the player) related a singular conversation he once had with the late Dr. Johnson. J. asserted the Turkish government was the best, and Brook, who wrote the Earl of Essex, quoted,

"Who rules o'er freemen should himself be free;"
when J. absurdly answered, "You may as well say,

'Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat.'"
This gave J. the laugh against Brook.

We come next to a string of entries having reference to Sheridan. They are remarkable as relating to things which appear to have lain within Thompson's knowledge, and persons with whom he was acquainted. They seem to come at first hand and on the best authority. As, however, Thompson appears to have detested Sheridan, partly on political and patriotic grounds, and partly owing to some dramatic and literary crosses which he seems to have sustained at Sheridan's hands, they must be

taken with caution. The first entry is dated Nov. 8th, 1784. It is as follows :—

I was with Mr. Lacy to-day, who, on the presumption of his ability, as allowed by the critics on his last performance at Colman's Theatre, had spoke to *Sheridan*, who has not paid him for his moiety of the theatre, and has an arrear due to him of 4,000*l.* on his annuity. He waited on *Linley*, and *Ford*, and they mutually shut the door upon him, offering him a benefit for which he might play. He spurned this with contempt, and on his return home was arrested on the suit of R. Yates for 140*l.* for salary and clothes, for he is liable for all the debts. When he came to look for *Sheridan* he was gone to Chatsworth. So blushless a scoundrel never surely existed as this swindling member for Stafford.

In explanation of this it should be mentioned that Lacy had been Garrick's partner in Drury Lane Theatre, that when Garrick retired, Sheridan, Linley, and Ford bought his share among them, and subsequently found means to persuade Lacy to sell them his moiety too. Before this last transaction, however, Lacy, in order to strengthen his own interest in the house against Sheridan and Co., sought to bring in two persons named by Moore in his Life of Sheridan (vol. I., p. 198, ed. 1827), Captain Thomson and Mr. Langford, or perhaps wished to be out of it, and to dispose of his moiety to them. The first of the two can hardly have been any other than the author of this diary, although Moore spells his name without the *p*. We learn from Moore further, that Sheridan in his opposition to Lacy (on one occasion when their interests clashed)—

Had proceeded to the extremity of seceding from his own duties at the theatre, and inducing the principal actors to adopt the same line of conduct. Lacy was driven into a corner, but, according to a periodical of 1776 which Moore quotes, "acted with great temper and moderation ; and in order that the public might not be wholly disappointed he brought on old stock plays—his brother manager having robbed him of the means and instruments to do otherwise by taking away the performers."

This was a foul blow on Sheridan's part, and, as far as we gather from Moore's narrative, entirely unprovoked by any unjustifiable conduct of Lacy's. Moore does not attempt to palliate it in any way, from which we feel sure that it was, in fact, as outrageous as it appears. The important point to our present purpose, however, is, that the transaction shows Thompson as an ally of Lacy in theatrical speculation, and the would-be purchaser of some portion of Drury Lane Theatre, which intention was frustrated by the counter-machinations of Sheridan. We see then where the shoe pinches, when Thompson declaims against the demerits of the "member for Stafford." Under the date of January 15th, 1785, Captain Thompson mentions that a friend of his, one Captain Vaughan, Justice of Peace for Westminster and dramatic author, produced a comedy called *The Templar*, "which Sheridan promised should be done," &c. brought out, "at Drury Lane," but "which the managers of that theatre, afterwards declined, as not sufficiently finished for their stage, though it had received the applauses of all the wits of the age;" and, what is more to our present purpose, Thompson adds, "I'll answer for the

prologue being the best that ever was written, for I wrote it myself." Having thus stood sponsor for *The Templar*, and found it excluded from the Drury Lane stage after its reception having been promised by Sheridan, Captain Thompson may probably have felt his wrath wax hot against the man whom he would regard as having duped the author whom he had befriended. Thompson's own dramatic smatterings might have had a chance of seeing lamp-light if he could have secured a share in Drury Lane. The Sheridan firm seem to have viewed it as their interest to oust him from such a chance. Hence, probably, a good deal of the bitterness with which he constantly speaks of Sheridan. Under the date of Nov. 14th, 1784, we find—

Mr. Lacy showed me Linley's letter, refusing him to stand on Drury boards. He determined to write Sheridan. I would have had him determined to cut his throat.

Dec. 5th.—I called on Mr. Lacy, with whom I found *Sheridan*—the Devil whispering in the ear of Adam. One Lutter a Jew had put an execution in Drury Theatre for £1,500 on the scenes and wardrobe. *Sheridan* wanted him to influence the Jew to withdraw the execution. The Jew's implacable—he'll have flesh or money. Old *Ford* is in fits and *Linley's* out of tune, while *Wallis* on the part of Mrs. Garrick, swears he'll foreclose. *Mrs. Sheridan* says her gentle husband was agitated like *Werther*. She went to the country, and he to the humhums to recruit, tho' no man has dealt so roundly in hums. If he has a feeling left he must feel the trigger of a pistol : the roof of his house is off to eject him. Where is he to hide his devoted head ?

The last allusion is explained by another entry a few days earlier.—

Sir T. Clavering to eject *Sheridan* unroof'd his house. The newspapers have ceased to satirize *Sheridan* or the P. of Wales. His treasury soon stopp'd the mouth of every editor.

Dec. 7.—I saw Mr. Lacy, who signed a discharge for *Sheridan* to move the execution from the playhouse on their indemnification. He is now liable to Lutter's production and has taken their security, tho' they could not pay the debt. So easy, so placid, so meek, so weak, so honest a man I never met. A jail must now be alone his fate. A wife ready to lie in and four starving children could not move him to save himself and them ; but he must serve the man that has plundered him of everything.

The above extracts show that amid the stormy struggles of Parliament, Sheridan was far from having a quiet life of it at Drury Lane. Thompson evidently regarded him as the chief offender, and Lacy as the victim. Lacy, we may well suppose, found Sheridan a wild and shiftless manager, as, we have seen reason to think, he was an unscrupulous partner. With scenery and wardrobe under sequestration, the first thing was to get rid of the Jew who had this awkward lien upon them. Lacy, it appears, had parted with his share in the Theatre, amounting to half its value, to Sheridan and Co., who were now, in point of form, the sole proprietors, but had never paid Lacy for it. What the annuity was, on account of which 4,500*l.* of arrears was due—evidently to Lacy, although in Thompson's careless style it reads as if to Sheridan—is not clear. It might be supposed that an annuity out of the profits of management might have been the consideration for which Lacy had parted with his moiety, but the entry above quoted speaks as if the money value of that

share, *plus* the arrears of annuity, was due to Lacy. All that we can make out of it is, that Lacy, having never received in any shape value for what he had surrendered, had so far an interest still in the fortunes of the house, as that in its rescue from the clutches of the Jew lay his only chance of ever being paid his money. He therefore became liable for the sum claimed, we must suppose, by the Jew, in order to induce the latter to withdraw the execution. The Sheridan treasury was notoriously penniless, and yet Lacy accepted some bond from it as security to indemnify him for becoming thus liable to the Jew. A more rotten reed on which to lean cannot well be conceived. Besides all this, we have a further complication from a claim of Mrs. Garrick, the widow of the famous actor and manager, who, it seems, had a mortgage on the house or some of its properties. The weakness of Lacy in yielding to Sheridan's solicitations under these circumstances, is what draws forth the indignant comments of his friend Thompson. Certainly the powers of Sheridan in exercising fascination over the sources of supply, could hardly have received a higher tribute. To give greater piquancy to the whole embroglio, we have Sheridan in a roofless house in the month of December, driven to flee to the "Hummums" for shelter. Neither the *School for Scandal* nor *The Rivals* contains any situation quite equal to this. Embarrassments do not seem to have lightened as the season advanced. We read on Dec. 27th—

The Opera and Drury Lane Theatre are in a bad state, unfrequented and cold houses.

The next step in the dramatic development will not surprise the reader :—

Feb. 12, 1785.—Sheridan the parliamentary impostor and swindler now proved all his apostacy, and the execution of £1,500 which Lacy took out of the theatre he had suffered to revert to him.

18*th*.—Messrs. Bean, and Sainsbury the city alderman and tobaccoconist, paid Letter the Jew's debt, Sheridan having broken every promise as a man of honesty ; after which they put an execution in the theatre for £2,000.

Thus the fangs of destiny have closed on Lacy ; the Jew has sold him up or has got his body. Sheridan, the harlequin of finance, has visited the city and "raised the wind," brought an alderman and tobaccoconist to the rescue, and redeemed the profitless carcase of Lacy, and all this at the trifling cost of adding over 80 per cent to the debt in two months ! By manipulating his resources in this brilliant way, the 1,500*l.* has grown to 2,000*l.*, and the cold shade of "an execution" falls again on Drury Lane.

In that state we are sorry to leave it, but here the curtain falls on the "Charles Surface" of real life, with his friend "Mr. Premium" and without his "Uncle Noll." In plainer words this is the last mention we have of any of the parties in question, although the diary itself goes on to the 25th of the next month. It is saddening to find that "Uncle Noll," the *doux au machine* who sets all straight in the fictitious drama should be the only part wanting in the living one. But the most curious feature of

the whole is, that of all these transactions, Thomas Moore, Esquire, the biographer of Sheridan, knows absolutely nothing. You would never gather from his rosy-tinted pages, that Sheridan had any acquaintance with "one Lutter a Jew," or even, in quest of a friend in need, went east of Temple Bar. You would never suspect that a tile of Sheridan's house had been loose, or that a hair had been rumpled on a single wig in the Drury wardrobe. Thomas Moore is a truly Olympian biographer. Here is a typical passage :—

There was indeed something mysterious and miraculous about all his acquisitions whether in love, in learning, in wit, or in wealth. How or when his stock of knowledge was laid in nobody knew; it was as much a matter of marvel to those who never saw him read, as the mode of existence of the chameleon has been to those who fancied it never eat. His advances in the heart of his mistress were, as we have seen, equally trackless and inaudible—and his triumph was the first that even rivals knew of his love. In like manner the productions of his wit took the world by surprise,—being perfected in secret till ready for display, and then seeming to break from under the cloud of his indolence in full maturity of splendour. His financial resources had no less an air of magic about them, and *the mode in which he conjured up at this time the money for his first purchase into the theatre, remains as far as I can learn still a mystery.*

A solution of the "mystery" is perhaps suggested by the above extracts. They suggest that the divining-rod used was a very vulgar twig indeed, and that the deities invoked were "one Lutter a Jew of Harley Street," and others unnamed—many a dingy prototype of "little Premium" and his "friend," who was "an unconscionable dog." We seem to see Sheridan holding a levee of such in his roofless house, abowing his way through a crowd of such in the lobby of St. Stephen's, or holding them at bay in the manager's office at Drury Lane, tiding over one such difficulty after another by sheer dint of luck, audacity, and fascination, till at last the spell would work no more, and he died friendless and alone beneath the bailiff's eye. Of his end Moore gives a sad and touching picture, but of all the means so "germane" to that end he seems unconscious, unless it be that he wilfully ignored them.

We have seen that Captain Thompson had a large and varied acquaintance. He seems to have had the relish for gossip which tends in that direction; and, while it makes the pages of his journal teem with anecdote, impairs their value as testimony on any disputed point. We will here throw together a few of those which seem of the most striking interest. Here are a few notices of the tales then afloat regarding the early debauchery of George, Prince of Wales :—

Sept. 25, 1784.—A gentleman of veracity said at his table that the Prince of Wales was now grown so thoroughly debauched that he got speechless drunk every day after dinner. Heaven, what a prospect for England!

Dec. 1.—Mr. Angelo told me a piece of duplicity and ungenerous conduct in the Prince of Wales, which will for ever do him discredit, but it marks the man who has the vices of Harry the Fifth without one of his virtues. He told Angelo, as soon as his household was established, he would give Mrs. Angelo a good place, to support her and her family, and held out his hand to the old florid upright Italian to kiss. This he used as an introduction for Lord Malden to bring letters to her two fair and,

beautiful daughters, Sophia and Ann. The mother detected the disingenuous conduct, and wrote a letter with the proper resentment of her bosom ; the Prince read it, and with great *sang froid* said, "The woman may be right."

Jan. 17, 1785.—Sir Geo. Young, whom I had cautioned lest he should lose his yatch (*sic*), waited on the Prince of Wales, his patron, to-day. Past one his Highness gave him an audience in bed. He had been up all night. Alas, thoughtless youth !

Jan. 18, 1785.—The Prince being on a visit to Mrs. Hubbart in the country, sent his respects to Sir Abraham Hume, and he would sup with him on a named day, and beg'd the time might be made 12 o'clock. The Prince's condescension highly flattered Sir Abm. ; the fatted calf was killed, and the best qual. in the circle of his vicinity bidden. Twelve o'clock came—1—2—3—4, and no prince ; when Sir Ab. with the best face that could be called up on such disappointment was assumed (*sic*). The supper being half done, in came the Prince. All thrown into confusion and chaos. He took the curule chair, lean'd his head on his hand, play'd with a bit of dowy bread, and looked royally sulky. Sir Abm. attentive to his illustrious guest, thought a song might divert the royal dumps, when a fair lady began to canzonet :—

Prince grew bolder and bolder,
And cock'd up his shoulder
As fierce as great Jupiter Hammon ;

Rose from his seat, when aback of her chair, slip'd down, crawled out, disappeared, and returned to Mrs. Hubbart's, where he finished a festive evening.

Feb 5, 1785.—We had a masquerade at the opera. No people of fashion. The Prince of Wales box'd with Lord Hervey in a circle of _____. "Hal rob me the exchequer."

Feb. 26.—The intemperance of the Prince of Wales is such that the covers of his tables is (*sic*) alone more than his income. He gets drunk every day after dinner, and dances after 12 at night ; the last may carry off the intemperance of the first.

Mar. 2, 1785.—The Prince having persuaded Lady Payne to give him 2 balls the recreant knight, her spouse, beat this lovely lady.

Mar. 19.—Dined with Sir Francis Sykes . . . Our company was Major J. Mackay He said yesterday the Prince had the severest drinking-batch he had known. He locked the doors himself . . . and St. Leger was the toastmaster. He said the Prince's table was a thousand a month, and his stables, 22,000*l.* a year.

The next extract is one which connects the Prince with Sheridan ; it belongs to a slightly earlier period, but as regards subject-matter is distinct.

Sept. 30, 1784.—Mr. Sheridan became very violent on an attack made on the true side of his character in the Post, under the signature of Neptune, who exposed him as an arrant swindler, and the Prince as a drunkard, who gave Sheridan in a fit of ebriety an unlimited draught on his treasury to find out the author. Sheridan bribed all presses and searched without success.

Now, certain draughts of verses appear in the diary signed "N," and one such has the words "Morning Post" written opposite on the page. It seems a probable guess then, that N. stands for Neptune, and that the "Neptune" of *The Post* who lampooned Sheridan and the Prince was no other than our Thompson. The only difficulty is, why, if so, in a journal meant for his private eye, did he not set it down as his? It can only be answered, that when a man has become thoroughly used to a pseudonym, he identifies himself with that which it stands for, and to his

consciousness, therefore, "Neptune" and "Thompson" were equivalent terms. If he were writing for others to see, unless, indeed, he wished concealment, he would not do this, but would expressly state that the writer under the signature of "Neptune" was himself. That it would be quite in keeping with sentiments expressed concerning Sheridan and the Prince, for Thompson to have thus lampooned them, is manifest from many places of this journal, especially the extracts above given.

We have next collected a few relative to John Wilkes. One entry, containing his remarks on Johnson's credulity and spoiling the English language, has already been given among our *Johnsoniana* :—

Aug. 2, 1783.—I dined this day with Mr. Wilkes at his classick Tivoly at Keusington Gore which bandbox he has fitted up in the most elegant taste of amorous prints ; and this retreat is for him at 52 to solace himself in the arms of Mrs. Arnold—a mere Becky, and apparently without one requisite to entertain the elegant mind of a Wilkes ; but men are unequal in their pleasures. Mrs. Arnold has a beautiful child and a sensible little creature ; it is about six years old and possesses the tongue of Mr. Wilkes—I cannot conceive that he made the features so very different from any of his earlier performances . . . It was a pleasant day—but 'tis impossible to be otherwise with Wilkes.

Jan. 1, 1784.—Plymouth.—I read Johnstone's 3 vols. of *Juniper Jack*, a very inferior work to *Chrysal* or the *Reveries*. He touches at times on the character of Wilkes, but he paints with a trowel, and describes the man of the most finished manners and classical education in the style of St. Giles, and gives him a birth that would have disgraced Buckhorse.

Sept. 25, 1784.—I dined with Wilkes. He gave me a manuscript to peruse copied by Miss Wilkes in answer to the charges of one Durnford, a spirit-seller of the ward of Billingegate, who had charged him with malpractices and false accounts as chamberlain, which he clearly and wittily refutes. He also brings the charge of impiety and injustice against him for altering and defacing Guildhall chappell, which Wilkes answers with much pleasantry and exposes the meddling ass.

Oct. 1784.—Now died Mr. Watson, a facetious man and an old member of the Beefsteak Club ; he was dry and whimsical, and made some songs which he sang with a dry pleasantry—the best of these was "Wilkes and 45." On our way to Kensington we called at Wilkes Cabinet d'Amour, where we saw his Mistress Arnold—an arrant Becky, not young, and plain. She said she had long known Miss Maria Linley at Bath, and that she was not quite so (word dropt) a character as I had drawn (*sic*) her. I replied, women had in general two characters the none (?) allowed them and that I had only drawn the angelick part of her.

Oct. 20, 1784.—I dined with Mr. Wilkes at Mr. Lessingham's in Kensington, one who had been very instrumental in obtaining his election for him—which Mr. W. had very nearly lost by a false decency of respect to his wife who was dead—for the' he had not spoke to her for more than 20 years, he was so scrupulously nice to keep the house 10 days untill she was buried.

Nov. 7.—Mr. Wilkes dined with me ; I never saw him more lively or witty. He insisted upon it that he proposed me to be a member of the Beefsteak Club—and to succeed Mr. Watson.

Jan. 30, 1785.—I have always marked, when a man is select (*sic*) for a butt or mark to shoot at, that he is good-natured and not wise. I never was in company with Wilkes, but he always selected some man to drive his witlessness at as a butt—some I can remember . . . Brougham, John Churchill, C. Churchill, and particularly myself ; but he never gave out a shot that I did not return one as well runn'd down as I could. Bumby Green used to say, I *Wabell* always be with him to carry his *Magnificacy* and *inecacious talk*.

We may illustrate this by Boswell's account of the dinner-party at Mr. Dilly's, at which he contrived that Wilkes and Johnson should meet and sit side by side at table. Boswell's ingenuity was tasked to the utmost to carry his plot through, and the affair was characterized by Burke as the *ne plus ultra* of diplomacy. He was rewarded by Wilkes and Johnson both turning upon him as the only Scotchman present, and making him their butt for the rest of the meeting.

A string of naval anecdotes, or relating to naval personages, ought not to be omitted.

Aug. 16, 1783.—I took Burgundy and champaigne with Lord Keppel, and gave him a turtle. A mixed company, but neither wit, humour or information. Sea captains can't speak with any degree of ease before their superiors.

Feb. 7, 1784 (Afloat).—The weather uncommonly cold, severe, and boisterous. In the evening I stood in for Torbay, willing to anchor therein. When I approached the Berry Head a sudden and violent tempest of wind, hail, and snow, with the wind at north, came on with uncommon impetuosity. A meteor of bright and quick descent seemed to dart upon the ship. I taked (*sic*) and stood to sea in a storm of winter combustibles. I do not remember to have passed a more disagreeable night. I exposed myself to the weather till after 12 o'clock, and I believe was the only man in the ship in such a tempest who went to rest on a basin of water-gruel. But the motion was so various, quick and fatiguing, that it was impossible to even rest, much more to sleep.

Feb. 13, 1784.—No place can vary so much in its aspect as Portsmouth—its colours and concabines ragged; the pavement grass-grown; sales of furniture every day; the coffee-house with scarce a marine officer; Dilly's and stages empty in and out; taverns and inns without customers, and yet the prices continue the same.

15. I paid a visit to Admiral Montague. A coarser, rougher, ruder sea monster never existed.

16. Mr. Montague celebrated the Queen's birth on board the *Queen*. I could not help remarking the apostacy of the company; tho' every man, from the Admiral to myself, owed his chair to Lord Keppel, yet they never drank him, but quaffed bumpers to Howe, the reigning Lord. Oh, man, what an apostate art thou! When I charged my glass to Lord K., I charged the table with a comment. The company was stupid and captainish, and the Admiral vulgar and rough.

26.—I received a letter from Lord Keppel, telling me my voyage was fixed.

30.—I received my sailing orders from Lord Howe, who took the *Unicorn* from my command, and confined my voyage to Barbadoes, by which he deprived me of every opportunity of promoting my officers or of enriching myself by a freight. I sent Lieut. Popham with an express to Lord Keppel, desiring I might resign the command. He beg'd me to go the voyage, and if he came to the Board, everything should be established to me to my wishes and his promise.

Oct. 6, 1784.—I sent a new code and mode of signals to Lord Howe, which, with four flags, 300 different signals may be made, and by form, not by colours, which is ever liable to deceive when the sun shines upon them.

(Here the four flags are sketched in pen and ink, labelled, as follows.)

| | | | |
|-------|--------|---------|----------|
| Red. | White. | Blue. | Yellow. |
| A. | B. | C. | D. |
| Flag. | Coset. | Guidon. | Pendant. |

I received a polite answer in his way, dark as Erebus.

Nov. 28, 1784.—Lord Rodney set off to France, being ashamed of the evidence he gave on Johnston's tryal, against Sutton, which was *entamcoast* worse than a marine perjury. He gave on oath that he never knew a Court Martial held at sea, though he had issued orders for many himself, and at which Lord Hood sat as president.

The trial referred to arose out of the battle with the French, under Suffrein, in the Cape de Verd Islands. Commodore Johnson, on the British side, brought Captain Sutton of the *Isis*, to a court-martial for not supporting him, but the latter was honourably acquitted.

Jan. 29, 1785.—I saw Lord Howe, who was as black as a Turnado—the Prince of Dusky Bay. He mumbled, he muttered, he did not utter. I sought some explanations of my voyage, but I might as well have consulted the King of the Joliffs.

Feb. 26, 1785.—I received a dark, unintelligible letter from Lord Howe on the petition of the masters and surgeons to Parliament; indeed it was of that hidden and obscure quality, you may read it as well backward as forward.

Of this petition we learn, from another entry in the journal, that it was in the matter of the pay, or half-pay, of the petitioners, that it was introduced to the Lords by Lord Mahon, and that “Mr. Pitt promised to countenance the petitioners by relieving their necessities.” Our Captain adds, “This was a reviving cordial to my mind, and renewed my spirits, mirth, and pleasantry.”

March 16.—I dined with Lord Howe, First Commissioner: the Admirals Barrington and Campbell and Commodore Hotham were there. Pool and Henry, besides his lady and 3 daughters, as white as his Lordship is black. My Lord’s grandmother was a natural daughter of George the 1st, and she married a Mr. Howe of Ireland who was ennobled to countenance her descent. Our dinner was superb, served in plate, excellent viands and rich wines. But there reigned a dulness, a coldness, a stiffness, a damned cramp that destroyed all conviviality. How very strange it is that a man shall collect all the choice good things for his own pride and his guest’s pallates, and yet never bring those very charming guests to his table, wit, goodnature, and affability.

His Lordship is saturnine, grave and dull—thick in his speech and not clear in his matter; all the strainers of Aristotle’s school would not thin or refine his oratory. He was born on a dark day of November, and never lost the colour of the time he first breathed in. Admiral Barrington mentioned that Admiral Vernon had given 300l. to Zambechari to go up with him in his balloon. His Lordship remarked it was a pity he should suffer by so much serial folly. I replied, “Your Lordship has it in your power to save his character and cash.” “How so?” Captain T.—“By giving him an order as first Lord of the Admiralty not to leave the country.” My joke hit every muscle in the room but his Lordship’s. We pranced over this ostentatious display of cold plate for three hours and bowed; 5 such dinners in my future life would kill me.

Jan. 23, 1785.—I passed the day with my friend Jackson, where I met Mr. Masterman and Sir Geo. Young. Mr. Masterman ably described that our want of success in the last war arose from the faction of a party among our officers. Sir Sam Hood denied the assistance within his ability to Adm. Graves in the Chesapeake, and to Rodney on the 10th of April—for how could his squadron be equally engaged that had few or none killed? The plunder of the publick by all was too atrocious, from Sir E. Hughes in India to Admiral Arbuthnot in America who shared the profits of rapine with his secretary Green, who was known through the fleet to be the most profligate and prostituted knave.

The following are curious and characteristic:—

Jan. 29, 1784.—I saw O’Hara to-day; he had the shortest leg in a boot I ever beheld. He was going to instruct the Siddons in emphasis, for she is not in the habit of it. He declaimed violently against Sheridan as the first profligate and ingrate of the age.

Feb. 24, 1784.—This evening I went to see poor old Tom Davies. Found him unwell in his bed-room, petulant and garrulous. I gave him the character and skeleton of Master Stephen; it was written by myself and Garrick, tho' Garrick was too timid to publish it, and while the matter was in composition Garrick put himself in every attitude of Stevens. Garrick's excellence was mimickry. He was a Jack in apes.

Sept. 26, 1784.—Mr. Lacy having performed Hamlet a few nights ago at the Hay-market stage, and much against his friends' opinions, desired me to alter Hamlet. Mrs. Vaughan and I have often talked upon the subject. I always conclude the prince should be saved. Reading Tom Davies' miscellany, I think he makes some judicious remarks upon the errors of that play. The closet scene should have the portraits of the 2 brothers, which would relieve the sitting scene, for it is too long; and if the ghost appears on the platform in armour to the guard, there is no occasion for it in her dressing-room, particularly as he says,

"My father in his habit, as he lived!"

which could not be the habit of armour, for that was the dress of the martial field only. Criticks may observe it is no matter, as she does not ~~see~~ the ghost; and as for the change of vestment, it cannot be difficult for a spiritual agent to assume any form if one form.

I disapprove Garrick's alteration, but I wish to reject some parts but add nothing; it is like doing away the ancient rust of an old cathedral by oaker and white wash, I would kill him in the 3rd act at prayers as a usurper, a villain, and a religious hypocrite.

Oct. 1, 1784.—The Queen most graciously accepted of three Angora cows I brought from Africa.

9.—The African cows were delivered at the Queen's palace. I gave the carrier five guineas for his trouble, and the royal munificence ordered him one shilling more.

Nov. 11.—Tom Lowndes the bookseller died to-day, who never gave more for a novel than one guinea. To this poor Mrs. Gibbs can well subscribe. No padding against an author's empty praise was ever admitted. He was the dullest rude niggardly fellow that the muses ever made to sell their works. And yet this fellow made a fortune with other men's brains.

Nov. 15.—Quin was fine. When he was ask'd by what law did they behead King Charles the 1st? he replied, "By the laws he left!"

Nov. 18, 1784.—Mr. Lynn related to-day that the surgeons, in spite of the vigilance of the Irish Giant's friends, obtained the body for dissection. They made several attempts to bury it in the Thames, and to even convey it to Dover. But the body-hunters were too keen for all they aim'd at; and after keeping the corpse 14 days, they sold it to John Hunter for 100*l.* The heart was preserved, and was very large. . . . The stature of the skeleton measures 8 ft. 2 in.

Nov. 22.—When Mr. Vaughan brought out his piece called *Loue's Metamorphoses*, to which I wrought a musical prologue and Mrs. Wrighter sang it, a person was much wanted to play Maria. Mrs. Vaughan recommended the part to a young woman and pretty, who appeared to have abilities but was much neglected. This was the Mrs. Siddons who afterwards made so great a figure. The farce was performed in 1776.

Dec. 8, 1784.—I passed the day with my worthy friend Jackson. . . . He shew'd me the original letter of King Charles 1st, written with his own hand "to Capt. Pennington, to deliver up his ships to the French admiral before Rochelle, and if any of his captains refused, to force and compel them to do the same." Can anything prove so much the hypocrisy of this prince? Falton knew the cause of the delay; and he probed the part in the State secret.

Jan. 2, 1785.—Lady Milla, altho' she has lost an eye, a cheek, a side, and a leg by the palsy, yet she went off with her footmen to France. She is the wife of Sir Thomas Milla in India, a natural son of the Pretender by the sister of Lord Blandford.

Jan. 15, 1785.—Mr. McKenzie, a Scots advocate who had lost Millian and ~~had~~ the

hundred pounds, being first cousin to the first and uncle to the second, put an execution on their effects, whereon I had lent them £42*l.* When they waited on me to relate the event, I said, they might have had cause to repine had an Englishman served them so, but as he was a Scot and a relation they had no reason to complain.

March 22, 1785.—Mr. Jackson had ever been intimate in the late Lord Chatham's family, and speaking of Mr. Wm. Pitt, the present Minister, Lord Chatham would often say to Mr. J. when he was there, "I recommend you, sir, to talk with my son William, who tho' a youth of 18 years old, yet you will not find him uninteresting or uninformed." Mr. J. indeed was amazed at his abilities, his information and logick, in the study of which he was fond and laborious.

Captain Thompson and Horace Walpole each in their several styles record the outburst of aeronaut errantry which distinguished the autumn and winter of 1784-5. The following extracts are from the former, and there are other entries like them :—

Sept. 27th, 1784.—Mr. Sheldon, a man of surgical ability, but an arrant Quixot in air-balloon bubbles, made a trip to France to improve himself in the style and manner of the process, and obtained Lord Folley's garden to exhibit his airy nonsense in. The country was deserted to attend this matter. The balloon was of canvas and filled with straw and smoke, and four gentlemen *Daedali* to ascend. However, the machine burst and many thousands disappointed returned home, or visited Lunardi's at the Pantheon, where they took 1,500 shillings the first day's exhibition. The madness of the age is not to be described. Every head seems filled with balloon materials, and is borne as wind and folly drive.

March 23rd, 1785.—A severe cold day with snow storms. I entered the fields to see Zambecarri and Sir E. Vernon mount at the tail of a balloon-kite into the air. The first is an Italian sailor and served as a lieutenant under Don Langora at the fight of St. Vincent, was cashiered for some misdemeanour, and emigrated to England as an adventurer in the air. The second is an English admiral—not sane—his friends ought to have confined him to a fire-side at Chelsea. The day on earth is so severe that the atmosphere must be severely frigid, at least thirty degrees colder. The velocity of the balloon was wonderful, and out of sight in half —. My own opinion is they may perish by the cold.

The last date in the book informs us that though suffering much from the coldness, as our critic anticipated, the voyagers returned to *terra firma* after a forty miles' run in one hour, having gained an altitude of three miles.

This little volume, which we have been picking and plundering for the reader, without betraying any new individual fact of historical interest, or showing any trace of a genius above the poetaster's, yet has the merit of enabling the men of to-day to shake hands with their grandfathers more effectually than any book of which we know. The sweep of the scythe has passed over the men and women of whom we read; but in these pages we seem to see them live and move again, as if we met them in Fleet-street or Bedford-square. Passed quite away, but not much more than just passed, they have the fascination of being exactly out of reach of living memory, beyond the visible horizon, yet tantalizingly near its brink. We know the faces of many of them from the recent National Portrait Exhibition.—John Wilkes in particular, with his long visage, and self-complacent smirk, and restless-looking eye, seated with his daughter

at his elbow, looks quite as wicked on canvas as Thompson describes him. What a little way below the sod they seem to lie, yet so completely gone! Their morals and manners are painted in the busy gossiping chronicle of our Captain; and they are certainly, with great respect for our grandmothers, not such as to make us greatly regret that gone they are. John Wilkes himself, for instance, was evidently one of the most amusing men of his period. Of some of his table-talk Boswell has given a sample, but it has evidently run through the filter of the exceptionally decent society among whom the occasion of Boswell's meeting Wilkes occurred, and does not represent the man as he for the most part was and talked. And Thompson constantly shows how largely society was "tarred with the same brush" as John Wilkes. He seizes on the most repulsive features of a doubtful story, dwells upon their worst supposable side, and calls in the aid of such wit and fancy as he has at command, to give liveliness to the exposure. Our older dramatists constantly make or find occasions for loose *equivocates* in their dialogue; Captain Thompson transfers the affection so manifested for what is vicious, from the stage affection to that of real life. The rule suggested by his diary is, to believe in nothing as harmless, and pass by nothing as doubtful, which can by possibility be made to appear evil. Such satire, under the plea of unmasking vice, really propagates it, and rubs in the impurity which it professes to wish to efface.



A TIME TO TALK

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

"A TELEGRAM."



HIS is a very eventful day for me, George," said Augustus, as they strolled through the garden after breakfast. "The trial was fixed for the 18th, and to-day is the 14th; I suppose the verdict will be given to-day."

"But you have really no doubt of the result? I mean, no more than anxiety on so momentous a matter must suggest?"

"Pardon me. I have grave doubts. There was such a marriage, as is alleged, formed by my grandfather; a marriage in every respect legal. They may not have the same means of proving that which we have; but we know it. There was a son born to that marriage. We have the letter of

old Lami, asking my grandfather to come over to Bruges for the christening, and we have the receipt of Hedges and Smart, the jewellers, for a silver gilt ewer and cup which were engraved with the Bramleigh crest and cypher, and despatched to Belgium as a present; for my grandfather did not go himself, pretending something or other, which evidently gave offence; for Lami's next letter declares that the present has been returned, and

expresses a haughty indignation at my grandfather's conduct. I can vouch for all this. It was a sad morning when I first saw those papers; but I did see them, George, and they exist still. That son of my grandfather's they declare to have married, and his son is this Pracontal. There is the whole story, and if the latter part of the narrative be only as truthful as I believe the first to be, he, and not I, is the rightful owner of Castello."

L'Estrange made no reply ; he was slowly going over in his mind the chain of connection, and examining, link by link, how it held together.

"But why," asked he at length, "was not this claim preferred before? Why did a whole generation suffer it to lie dormant?"

"That is easily—too easily explained. Lami was compromised in almost every country in Europe; and his son succeeded him in his love of plot and conspiracy. Letters occasionally reached my father from this latter; some of them demanding money in a tone of actual menace. A confidential clerk, who knew all my father's secrets, and whom he trusted most implicitly, became one day a defaulter and absconded, carrying with him a quantity of private papers, some of which were letters written by my father, and containing remittances which Montagu Lami—or Louis Langrange, or whatever other name he bore—of course, never received, and indignantly declared he believed had never been despatched. This clerk, whose name was Hesketh, made Lami's acquaintance in South America, and evidently encouraged him to prefer his claim with greater assurance, and led him to suppose that any terms he preferred must certainly be complied with! But I cannot go on, George; the thought of my poor father struggling through life in this dark conflict rises up before me, and now I estimate the terrible alternation of hope and fear in which he must have lived, and how despairingly he must have thought of a future, when this deep game should be left to such weak hands as mine. I thought they were cruel words once in which he spoke of my unfitness to meet a great emergency,—but now I read them very differently."

"Then do you really think he regarded this claim as rightful and just?"

"I cannot tell that; at moments I have leaned to this impression; but many things dispose me to believe that he saw or suspected something that invalidated the claim, but still induced him to silence the pretender by hush money."

"And you yourself—"

"Don't ask me, my dear friend;—do not ask me the question I see is on your lips. I have no courage to confess, even to you, through how many moods I pass every day I live. At moments I hope and firmly believe I rise above every low and interested sentiment, and determine I will do as I would be done by;—I will go through this trial as though it were a matter apart from me, and in which truth and justice were my only objects. There are hours in which I feel equal to any sacrifice, and could say to this man:—'There! take it; take all we have in the world. We have no right to be here; we are beggars and outcasts. And then—I can't tell how or

why—it actually seems as if there was a real Tempter in one's nature, lying in wait for the moment of doubt and hesitation ; but suddenly, quick as a flash of lightning, a thought would dart across my mind, and I would begin to canvass this and question that ; not fairly, not honestly, mark you, but casuistically and cunningly ; and worse, far worse than all this,—actually hoping that, no matter on which side lay the right, that we should come out victorious."

" But have you not prejudiced your case by precipitancy ? They tell me that you have given the others immense advantage by your openly declared doubts as to your title."

" That is possible. I will not deny that I may have acted imprudently. The compromise to which I at first agreed struck me, on reflection, as so ignoble and dishonourable, that I rushed just as rashly into the opposite extreme. I felt, in fact, George, as though I owed this man a reparation for having ever thought of stifling his claim ; and I carried this sentiment so far that Sedley asked me one day, in a scornful tone, what ill my family had done me I was so bent on ruining them ? Oh, my dear friend, if it be a great relief to me to open my heart to you, it is with shame I confess that I cannot tell you truthfully how weak and unable I often feel to keep straight in the path I have assigned myself. How, when some doubt of this man's right shoots across me, I hail the hesitation like a blessing from heaven. What I would do ; what I would endure that he could not show his claim to be true, I dare not own. I have tried to reverse our positions in my own mind, and imagine I was he ; but I cannot pursue the thought, for whenever the dread final rises before me, and I picture to myself our ruin and destitution, I can but think of him as a deadly implacable enemy. This sacrifice, then, that I purposed to make with a pure spirit and a high honour, is too much for me. I have not courage for that I am doing ;—but I'll do it still ! "

L'Estrange did his utmost to rally him out of his depression, assuring him that, as the world went, few men would have attempted to do what he had determined on, and frankly owning, that in talking over the matter with Julia they were both disposed to regard his conduct as verging on Quixotism.

" And that is exactly the best thing people will say of it. I am lucky if they will even speak so favourably."

" What's this—a telegram ? " cried L'Estrange, as the servant handed him one of those square-shaped missives, so charged with destiny that one really does not know whether to bless or curse the invention, which, annihilating space, brings us so quickly face to face with fortune.

" Read it, George ; I cannot," muttered Bramleigh, as he stood against a tree for support.

" Ten o'clock. Court-house, Navan. Jury just come out—cannot agree to verdict—discharged. New trial. I write post.

" SEDLEY."

"Thank heaven, there is at least a respite," said Bramleigh ; and he fell on the other's shoulder, and hid his face.

"Bear up, my poor fellow. You see that, at all events, nothing has happened up to this. Here are the girls coming. Let them not see you in such emotion."

"Come away, then ; come away. I can't meet them now ; or do you go and tell Nelly what this news is—she has seen the messenger, I'm sure."

L'Estrange met Nelly and Julia in the walk, while Augustus hastened away in another direction. "There has been no verdict. Sedley sends his message from the court-house this morning, and says the jury cannot agree, and there will be another trial."

"Is that bad or good news ?" asked Nelly, eagerly.

"I'd say good," replied he ; "at least, when I compare it with your brother's desponding tone this morning. I never saw him so low."

"Oh, he is almost always so of late. The coming here and the pleasure of meeting you rallied him for a moment, but I foresaw his depression would return. I declare it is the uncertainty, the never-ceasing terror of what next, is breaking him down ; and if the blow fell at once, you would see him behave courageously and nobly."

"He ought to get away from this as soon as possible," said L'Estrange. "He met several acquaintances yesterday in Rome, and they teased him to come to them, and worried him to tell where he was stopping. In his present humour he could not go into society, but he is ashamed to his own heart to admit it."

"Then why don't we go at once ?" cried Julia.

"There's nothing to detain us here," said L'Estrange, sorrowfully.

"Unless you mean to wait for my marriage," said Julia, laughing, "though, possibly, Sir Marcus may not give me another chance."

"Oh, Julia !"

"Oh, Julia ! Well, dearest, I do say shocking things, there's no doubt of it ; but when I've said them, I feel the subject off my conscience, and revert to it no more."

"At all events," said L'Estrange, after a moment of thought, "let us behave when we meet him as though this news was not bad. I know he will try to read in our faces what we think of it, and on every account it is better not to let him sink into depression."

The day passed over in that discomfort which a false position so inevitably imposes. The apparent calm was a torture, and the efforts at gaiety were but moments of actual pain. The sense of something impending was so poignant that at every stir—the opening of a door or the sound of a bell—there came over each a look of anxiety the most intense and eager. All their attempts at conversation were attended with a fear lest some unhappy expression, some ill-timed allusion might suggest the very thought they were struggling to suppress ; and it was with a feeling of relief they parted and said good-night, where, at other times, there had been only regret at separating.

Day after day passed in the same forced and false tranquillity, the preparations for the approaching journey being the only relief to the intense anxiety that weighed like a load on each. At length, on the fifth morning, there came a letter to Augustus in the well-known hand of Sedley, and he hastened to his room to read it. Some sharp passages there had been between them of late on the subject of the compromise, and Bramleigh, in a moment of forgetfulness and anger, even went so far as to threaten that he would have recourse to the law to determine whether his agent had or had not overstepped the bounds of his authority, and engaged in arrangements at total variance to all his wishes and instructions. A calm but somewhat indignant reply from Sedley, however, recalled Bramleigh to reconsider his words, and even ask pardon for them, and since that day their intercourse had been even more cordial and frank than ever. The present letter was very long, and quite plainly written, with a strong sense of the nature of him it was addressed to. For Sedley well knew the temper of the man—his moods of high resolve and his moments of discouragement—his desire to be equal to a great effort, and his terrible consciousness that his courage could not be relied on. The letter began thus :—

" MY DEAR SIR,—

" If I cannot, as I hoped, announce a victory, I am able at least to say that we have not been defeated. The case was fairly and dispassionately stated, and probably an issue of like importance was never discussed with less of acrimony, or less of that captious and overreaching spirit which is too common in legal contests. This was so remarkable as to induce the Judge to comment on it in his charge, and declare that in all his experience on the bench he had never before witnessed anything so gratifying or so creditable alike to plaintiff and defendant.

" Lawson led for the other side, and, I will own, made one of the best openings I ever listened to, disclaiming at once any wish to appeal to sympathies or excite feelings of pity for misfortunes carried on through three generations of blameless sufferers ; he simply directed the jury to follow him in the details of a brief and not very complicated story, every step of which he would confirm and establish by evidence.

" The studious simplicity of his narrative was immense art, and though he carefully avoided even a word that could be called high-flown, he made the story of Montagu Bramleigh's courtship of the beautiful Italian girl one of the most touching episodes I ever listened to.

" The marriage was, of course, the foundation of the whole claim, and he arrayed all his proofs of it with great skill. The recognition in your grandfather's letters, and the tone of affection in which they were written, his continual reference to her in his life, left little if any doubt on the minds of the jury, even though there was nothing formal or official to show that the ceremony of marriage had passed ; he reminded the jury that the defence would rely greatly on this fact, but the fact of a missing

registry-book was neither so new nor so rare in this country as to create any astonishment, and when he offered proof that the church and the vestry-room had been sacked by the rebels in '98, the evidence seemed almost superfluous. The birth and baptism of the child he established thoroughly: and here he stood on strong grounds, for the infant was christened at Brussels by the Protestant Chaplain of the Legation at the Hague, and he produced a copy of the act of registry, stating the child to be son of Montagu Bramleigh, of Cossender Manor, and Grosvenor Square, London, and of Enrichetta his wife. Indeed, as Lawson declared, if these unhappy foreigners had ever even a glimmering suspicion that the just rights of this poor child were to be assailed and his inheritance denied him, they could not have taken more careful and cautious steps to secure his succession than the simple but excellent precautions they had adopted.

"The indignation of Lami at what he deemed the unfeeling and heartless conduct of Montagu Bramleigh—his cold reception of the news of his son's birth, and the careless tone in which he excused himself from going over to the christening—rose to such a pitch that he swore the boy should never bear his father's name, nor ever in any way be beholden to him, and 'this rash oath it was that has carried misery down to another generation, and involved in misfortune others not more blameless nor more truly to be pitied than he who now seeks redress at your hands.' This was the last sentence he uttered after speaking three hours, and obtaining a slight pause to recruit his strength.

"Issue of Montagu Bramleigh being proved, issue of that issue was also established, and your father's letters were given in evidence to show how he had treated with these claimants and given largely in money to suppress or silence their demands. Thos. Bolton, of the house of Parker and Bolton, bankers, Naples, proved the receipt of various sums from Montagu Bramleigh in favour of A. B. C., for so the claimant was designated, private confidential letters to Bolton showing that these initials were used to indicate one who went under many aliases, and needed every precaution to escape the police. Bolton proved the journal of Giacomo Lami, which he had often had in his own possession. In fact this witness damaged us more than all the rest; his station and position in life, and the mode in which he behaved under examination, having great effect on the jury, and affording Lawson a favourable opportunity of showing what confidence was felt in the claimant's pretensions by a man of wealth and character, even when the complications of political conspiracy had served to exhibit him as a dangerous adventurer.

"Waller's reply was able, but not equal to his best efforts. It is but fair to him, however, to state that he complained of our instructions, and declared that your determination not to urge anything on a point of law, nor tender opposition on grounds merely technical, left him almost powerless in the case. He devoted his attention almost entirely to dis-

prove the first marriage, that of Mr. B. with Enrichetta Lami; he declared that the relative rank of the parties considered, the situation in which they were placed towards each other, and all the probabilities of the case duly weighed, there was every reason to believe the connection was illicit. This view was greatly strengthened by Mr. B.'s subsequent conduct: his refusal to go over to the christening, and the utter indifference he displayed to the almost menacing tone of old Lami's letters; and when he indignantly asked the jury 'if a man were likely to treat in this manner his wife and the mother of his first-born, the heir to his vast fortune and estates?' there was a subdued murmur in the court that showed how strongly this point had told.

"He argued that when a case broke down at its very outset, it would be a mere trifling with the time of the court to go further to disprove circumstances based on a fallacy. As to the christening and the registration of baptism, what easier than for a woman to declare whatever she pleased as to the paternity of her child? It was true he was written son of Montagu Bramleigh; but when we once agree that there was no marriage, this declaration has no value. He barely touched on the correspondence and the transmission of money abroad, which he explained as the natural effort of a man of high station and character to suppress the notoriety of a youthful indiscretion. Political animosity had, at that period, taken a most injurious turn, and scandal was ransacked to afford means of attack on the reputations of public men.

"I barely give you the outline of his argument, but I will send you the printed account of the trial as soon as the shorthand writer shall have completed it for press. Baron Jocelyn's charge was, I must say, less in our favour than I had expected; and when he told the jury that the expressions of attachment and affection in Mr. B.'s letters, and the reiterated use of the phrase 'my dear, dear wife' demanded their serious consideration as to whether such words would have fallen from a man hampered by an illicit connection, and already speculating how to be free of it;—all this, put with great force and clearness, and a certain appeal to their sense of humanity, did us much disservice. The length of time he dwelt on this part of the case was so remarkable that I overheard a Q.C. say he had not known till then that his lordship was retained for the plaintiff.

"When he came to that part where allusion was made to the fact of the claimant being a foreigner, he made an eloquent and effective appeal to the character of English justice, which elicited a burst of applause in the court that took some seconds to repress; and this, I am told, was more owing to the popular sympathy with the politics of old Lami, and his connection with the rebellion of '98, than with any enthusiasm for his lordship's oratory.

"The jury were three hours in deliberation. I am confidentially informed that we had but five with, and seven against us; the verdict, as you know, was not agreed on. We shall go to trial in spring, I hope with Wallace to lead for us, for I am fully persuaded the flaw lies in the history

subsequent to the marriage of Mr. B., and that it was a mistake to let the issue turn on the event which had already enlisted the sympathies of the jury in its favour.

"In conclusion, I ought to say, that the plaintiff's friends regard the result as a victory, and the National press is strong in asserting that, if the Orange element had been eliminated from the jury-box, there is little doubt that Count Bramleigh—as they call him—would at that hour be dispensing the splendid hospitalities of a princely house to his county neighbours, and the still more gratifying benefits of a wide charity to the poor around him. Writing rapidly, as I do, I make no pretension to anything like an accurate history of the case. There are a vast variety of things to which I mean to direct your attention when a more favourable moment will permit. I will only now add, that your presence in England is urgently required, and that your return to Castello, to resume there the style of living that alike becomes the proprietor and the place, is, in the opinion of all your friends, much to be desired.

"Mr. Waller does not hesitate to say that your absence decided the case against you, and was heard to declare openly that 'he for one had no fancy to defend a cause for a man who voluntarily gave himself up as beaten.'

"May I entreat then you will make it your convenience to return here? I cannot exaggerate the ill effects of your absence, nor to what extent your enemies are enabled to use the circumstance to your discredit. Jurors are after all but men, taken from the common mass of those who read and talk over the public scandals of the hour, and all the cautions of the Bench never yet succeeded in making men forget, within the court-house, what they had for weeks before been discussing outside of it.

"At all events, do not dismiss my suggestion without some thought over it, or, better still, without consulting some friends in whose sense and intelligence you have confidence. I am, with many apologies for the liberty I have thus taken,

"Most faithfully, your servant,
"T. SEDLEY."

When Bramleigh had read this letter carefully over, he proceeded to Nelly's room, to let her hear its contents.

"It's not very cheery news," said he, "but it might be worse. Shall I read it for you, or will you read it yourself?"

"Read it, Gusty; I would rather hear it from you," said she, as she sat down, with her face to the window, and partially averted from him as he sat.

Not a word dropped from her while he read, and though once or twice he paused as if to invite a remark or a question, she never spoke, nor by a look or a gesture denoted how the tidings affected her.

"Well," asked he at last, "what do you say to it all?"

"It's worse,—I mean worse for us,—than I had ever suspected! Surely,

Gusty, you had no conception that their case had such apparent strength and solidity?"

"I have thought so for many a day," said he gloomily.

"Thought that they, and not we——" she could not go on.

"Just so, dearest," said he, drawing his chair to her side, and laying his hand affectionately on her shoulder.

"And do you believe that poor papa thought so?" said she, and her eyes now swam in tears.

A scarcely perceptible nod was all his answer.

"Oh, Gusty, this is more misery than I was prepared for!" cried she, throwing herself on his shoulder. "To think that all the time we were—what many called—outraging the world with display; exhibiting our wealth in every ostentatious way; to think that it was not ours, that we were mere pretenders, with a mock rank, a mock station."

"My father did not go thus far, Nelly," said he gravely. "That he did not despise these pretensions I firmly believe, but that they ever gave him serious reason to suppose his right could be successfully disputed, this I do not believe. His fear was, that when the claim came to be resisted by one like myself, the battle would be ill fought. It was in this spirit he said, 'Would that Marion had been a boy!'"

"And what will you do, Gusty?"

"I'll tell you what I will not do, Nelly," said he firmly: "I will not, as this letter counsels me, go back to live where it is possible I have no right to live, nor spend money to which the law may to-morrow declare I have no claim. I will abide by what that law shall declare, without one effort to bias it in my favour. I have a higher pride in submitting myself to this trial than ever I had in being the owner of Castello. It may be that I shall not prove equal to what I propose to myself. I have no over-confidence in my own strength, but I like to think, that if I come well through the ordeal, I shall have done what will dignify a life, humble even as mine, and give me a self-respect, without which existence is valueless to me. Will you stand by me, Nelly, in this struggle—I shall need you much?"

"To the last," said she, giving him both her hands, which he grasped within his, and pressed affectionately.

"Write, then, one line from me to Sedley, to say that I entrust the case entirely to his guidance; that I will not mix myself with it in any way, nor will I return to England till it be decided; and say, if you can, that you agree with me in this determination. And then, if the L'Estranges are ready, let us start at once."

"They only wait for us; Julia said so this morning."

"Then we shall set out to-morrow."

CHAPTER XLIX.

A LONG TÊTE-À-TÊTE.

"SCANT courtesy, I must say," exclaimed Lady Augusta, as, after rapidly running her eyes over a note, she flung it across the table towards Pracontal.

They were seated tête-à-tête in that small drawing-room which looked out upon the garden and the grounds of the Borghese Palace.

"Am I to read it?" asked he.

"Yes, if you like. It is from Augustus Bramleigh, a person you feel some interest in."

Pracontal took up the note, and seemed to go very carefully over its contents.

"So then," said he, as he finished, "he thinks it better not to meet—not to know me."

"Which is no reason on earth for being wanting in a proper attention to *me*," said she, angrily. "To leave Rome without calling here, without consulting my wishes, and learning my intentions for the future, is a gross forgetfulness of proper respect."

"I take it, the news of the trial was too much for him. Longworth said it would, and that the comments of the press would be insupportable besides."

"But what have *I* to do with that, sir? Mr. Bramleigh's first duty was to come here. *I* should have been thought of. *I* was the first person this family should have remembered in their hour of difficulty."

"There was no intentional want of respect in it, I'll be bound," cried Pracontal. "It was just a bashful man's dread of an awkward moment—that English terror of what you call a 'scene'—that sent him off."

"It is generous of you, sir, to become his apologist. I only wonder"—here she stopped, and seemed confused.

"Go on, my lady. Pray finish what you began."

"No, sir. It is as well unsaid."

"But it was understood, my lady, just as well as if it had been uttered. Your ladyship wondered who was to apologize for *me*."

She grew crimson as he spoke; but a faint smile seemed to say how thoroughly she relished that southern keenness that could divine a half-uttered thought.

"How quick you are," said she, without a trace of irritation.

"Say, rather, how quick he ought to be who attempts to parry you at fence. And, after all," said he, in a lighter tone, "is it not as well that he has spared us all an embarrassment? *I* could not surely have been able to condole with *him*, and how could *he* have congratulated *me*!"

"Pardon me, Count, but the matter, so far as I learn, is precisely as it was before. There is neither subject for condolence nor gratulation."

"So far as the verdict of the jury went, my lady, you are quite right;

but what do you say to that larger, wider verdict pronounced by the press, and repeated in a thousand forms by the public? May I read you one passage, only one, from my lawyer Mr Kelson's letter?"

"Is it short?"

"Very short."

"And intelligible?"

"Most intelligible."

"Read it then."

"Here it is," said he, opening a letter, and turning to the last page.
"Were I to sum up what is the popular opinion of the result, I could not do it better than repeat what a City capitalist said to me this morning, "I'd rather lend Count Pracontal twenty thousand pounds to-day, than take Mr. Bramleigh's mortgage for ten."'"

"Let me read that. I shall comprehend his meaning better than by hearing it. This means evidently," said she, after reading the passage, "that your chances are better than his."

"Kelson tells me success is certain."

"And your cautious friend, Mr.——; I always forget that man's name?"

"Longworth?"

"Yes, Longworth. What does he say?"

"He is already in treaty with me to let him have a small farm which adjoins his grounds, and which he would like to throw into his lawn."

"Seriously?"

"No, not a bit seriously; but we pass the whole morning building these sort of castles in Spain, and the grave way that he entertains such projects ends by making me believe I am actually the owner of Castello and all its belongings."

"Tell me some of your plans," said she, with a livelier interest than she had yet shown.

"First of all, reconciliation, if that be its proper name, with all that calls itself Bramleigh. I don't want to be deemed a usurper, but a legitimate monarch. It is to be a restoration."

"Then you ought to marry Nelly. I declare that never struck me before."

"Nor has it yet occurred to me, my lady," said he, with a faint show of irritation.

"And why not, sir? Is it that you look higher?"

"I look higher," said he; and there was a solemn intensity in his air and manner as he spoke.

"I declare, Monsieur de Pracontal, it is scarcely delicate to say this to me."

"Your ladyship insists on my being candid, even at the hazard of my courtesy."

"I do not complain of your candour, sir. It is your—your—

"My pretension?"

" Well, yes, pretension will do."

" Well, my lady, I will not quarrel with the phrase. I do 'pretend,' as we say in French. In fact, I have been little other than a pretender these last few years."

" And what is it you pretend to? May I ask the question?"

" I do not know if I may dare to answer it," said he, slowly. . . . " I will explain what I mean," added he, after a brief silence, and drawing his chair somewhat nearer to where she sat. " I will explain. If, in one of my imaginative gossipries with a friend, I were to put forward some claim—some ambition—which would sound absurd coming from me now, but which, were I the owner of a great estate, would neither be extravagant nor ridiculous, the memory of that unlucky pretension would live against me ever after, and the laugh that my vanity excited would ring in my years long after I had ceased to regard the sentiment as vanity at all. Do you follow me?"

" Yes, I believe I do. I would only have you remember that I am not Mr. Longworth."

" A reason the more for my caution."

" Couldn't we converse without riddles, Count Pracontal?"

" I protest I should like to do so."

" And as I make no objection——"

" Then to begin. You asked me what I should do if I were to gain my suit; and my answer is, if I were not morally certain to gain it, I'd never exhibit myself in the absurd position of planning a life I was never to arrive at."

" You are too much a Frenchman for that."

" Precisely, madam. I am too much a Frenchman for that. The exquisite sensibility to ridicule puts a very fine edge on national character, though your countrymen will not admit it."

" It makes very tetchy acquaintances," said she, with a malicious laugh.

" And develops charming generosity in those who forgive us!"

" I cry off. I can't keep up this game of give and take flatteries. Let us come back to what we were talking of, that is, if either of us can remember it. O yes, I know it now. You were going to tell me the splendid establishment you'd keep at Castello. I am sure the cook will leave nothing to desire—but how about the stable? That 'steppere' will not exactly be in his place in an Irish county."

" Madam, you forget I was a lieutenant of hussars."

" My dear Count, that does not mean riding."

" Madam!"

" I should now rise and say 'Monsieur!' and it would be very good comedy after the French pattern; but I prefer the sofa and my ease, and will simply beg you to remember the contract we made the other day—that each was to be at liberty to say any impertinence to the other, without offence being taken."

Pracontal laid his hand on his heart, and bowed low and deep.

"There are some half a dozen people in that garden yonder, who have passed and repassed—I can't tell how many times—just to observe us. You'll see them again in a few minutes, and we shall be town-talk to-morrow, I'm certain. There are no *tête-à-têtes* ever permitted in Rome if a cardinal or a monsignore be not one of the performers."

"Are those they?" cried he, suddenly.

"Yes, and there's not the least occasion for that flash of the eye, and that hot glow of indignation on the cheek. I assure you, Monsieur, there is nobody there to '*couper la gorge*' with you, or share in any of those social pleasantries which make the 'Bois' famous. The curiously minded individual is a lady—a Mrs. Trumper—and her attendants are a few freshly arrived curatos. There now, sit down again, and look less like a wounded tiger, for all this sort of thing fusses and fevers me. Yes, you may fan me, though if the detectives return it will make the report more highly coloured."

Pracontal was now seated on a low stool beside her sofa, and fanning her assiduously.

"Not but these people are all right," continued she. "It is quite wrong in me to admit you to my intimacy—wrong to admit you at all. My sister is so angry about it, she won't come here—fact, I assure you. Now don't look so delighted and so triumphant, and the rest of it. As your nice little phrase has it, you '*are for nothing*' in the matter at all. It is all myself, my own whim, my fancy, my caprice. I saw that the step was just as unadvisable as they said it was. I saw that any commonly discreet person would not have even made your acquaintance, standing as I did; but unfortunately for me, like poor Eve, the only tree whose fruit I covet is the one I'm told isn't good for me. There go our friends once more. I wish I could tell her who you are, and not keep her in this state of torturing anxiety."

"Might I ask, my lady," said he, gravely, "if you have heard anything to my discredit or disparagement, as a reason for the severe sentence you have just spoken?"

"No, unfortunately not, for in that case my relatives would have forgiven me. They know the wonderful infatuation that attracts me to damaged reputations, and as they have not yet found out any considerable flaw in yours they are puzzled, out of all measure, to know what it is I see in you."

"I am overwhelmed by your flattery, madam," said he, trying to seem amused, but, in spite of himself, showing some irritation.

"Not that," resumed she, in that quiet manner which showed that her mind had gone off suddenly in another direction, "not that I owe much deference to the Bramleighs, who, one and all, have treated me with little courtesy. Marion behaved shamefully—that, of course, was to be expected. To marry that odious old creature for a position implied how she would abuse the position when she got it. As I said to Gusty, when a

young Oxford man gives five guineas for a mount, he doesn't think he has the worth of his money if he doesn't smash his collar-bone. There, put down that fan, you are making me feverish. Then the absurdity of playing *Peeress to me!* How ashamed the poor old man was; he reddened through all his rouge. Do you know," addod she, in an excited manner, "that she had the impertinence to compare her marriage with mine, and say, that at least rank and title were somewhat nobler ambitions than a mere subsistence and a settlement. But I answered her. I told her, ' You have forgotten one material circumstance. I did not live with your father ! ' O yes! we exchanged a number of little courtesies of this kind, and I was so sorry when I heard she had gone to Naples. I was only getting into stride when the race was over. As to my settlement, I have not the very vaguest notion who'll pay it; perhaps it may be *you*. Oh, of course, I know the unutterable bliss, but you must really ask your lawyer, how is my lien to be disposed of. Some one said to me the other day that, besides the estate, you would have a claim for about eighty thousand pounds."

"It was Longworth said so."

"I don't like your friend Longworth. Is he a gentleman?"

"Most unquestionably."

"Well, but I mean a born gentleman? I detest and I distrust your nature-made gentlemen, who, having money enough to 'get up' the part, deem that quite sufficient. I want the people whose families have given guarantees for character during some generations. Six o'clock! Only think, you are here three mortal hours! I declare, sir, this must not occur again; and I have to dress now. I dine at the Prince Cornarini's. Do you go there?"

"I go nowhere, my lady. I know no one."

"Well, I can't present you. It would be too compromising. And yet they want men like you very much here. The Romans are so dull and stately, and the English, who frequent the best houses, are so dreary. There, go away now. You want leave to come to-morrow, but I'll not grant it. I must hear what Mrs. Trumper says before I admit you again."

"When then may I——?"

"I don't know; I have not thought of it. Let it be—let it be when you have gained your law-suit," cried she, in a burst of laughter, and hurried out of the room.

CHAPTER L

CATTARO.

If Cattaro was more picturesque and strange-looking than the Bramleighs had expected, it was also far more poverty-stricken and desolate. The little town, escarp'd out of a lofty mountain, with the sea in front, consisted of little more than one straggling street, which followed every bend and indentation of the shore. It is true, wherever a little "plateau"

offered on the mountain, a house was built ; and to these small winding paths led up, through rocks bristling with the cactus, or shaded by oleanders large as olive-trees. Beautiful little bits of old Venetian architecture, in balconies or porticoes, peeped out here and there through the dark foliage of oranges and figs ; and richly-ornamented gates, whose arabesques yet glistened with tarnished gilding, were festooned with many a flowery creeper, and that small banksia-rose, so tasteful in its luxuriance. From the sea it would be impossible to imagine anything more beautiful or more romantic. As you landed, however, the illusion faded, and dirt, misery, and want stared at you at every step. Decay and ruin were on all sides. Palaces, whose marble mouldings and architraves were in the richest style of Byzantine art, were propped up by rude beams of timber that obstructed the footway, while from their windows and balconies hung rags and tattered draperies, the signs of a poverty within great as the ruin without. The streets were lined with a famished, half-clothed population, sitting idly or sleeping. A few here and there affected to be vendors of fruit and vegetables, but the mass were simply loungers reduced to the miserable condition of an apathy which saw nothing better to be done with life than dream it away. While Bramleigh and L'Estrange were full of horror at the wretchedness of the place, their sisters were almost wild with delight at its barbaric beauty, its grand savagery, and its brilliant picturesque character. The little inn, which probably for years had dispensed no other hospitalities than those of the cafe, that extended from the darkly-columned portico to half across the piazza, certainly contributed slightly to allay the grumblings of the travellers. The poorly furnished rooms were ill kept and dirty, the servants lazy, and the fare itself the very humblest imaginable.

Nothing but the unfailing good temper and good spirits of Julia and Nelly could have rallied the men out of their sulky discontent ; that spirit to make the best of everything, to catch at every passing gleam of sunlight on the landscape, and even in moments of discouragement to rally at the first chance of what may cheer and gladden,—this is womanly, essentially womanly. It belongs not to the man's nature ; and even if he should have it, he has it in a less discriminative shape and in a coarser fashion.

While Augustus and L'Estrange then sat sulkily smoking their cigars on the sea-wall, contemptuously turning their backs on the mountain variegated with every hue of foliage, and broken in every picturesque form, the girls had found out a beautiful old villa, almost buried in orange-trees in a small cleft of the mountain, through which a small cascade descended and fed a fountain that played in the hall ; the perfect stillness, only broken by the splash of the falling water, and the sense of delicious freshness imparted by the crystal circles eddying across the marble fount, so delighted them that they were in ecstasies when they found that the place was to be let, and might be their own for a sum less than a very modest “entresol” would cost in a cognate city.

"Just imagine, Gusty, he will let it to us for three hundred florins a year; and for fifteen hundred we may buy it out and out, for ever." This was Nelly's salutation as she came back full of all she had seen, and glowing with enthusiasm over the splendid luxuriance of the vegetation and the beauty of the view.

"It is really princely inside, although in terrible dilapidation and ruin. There are over two of the fireplaces the Doge's arms, which shows that a Venetian magnate once lived there."

"What do you say, George?" cried Bramleigh. "Don't you think you'd rather invest fifteen hundred florins in a boat to escape from this dreary hole than purchase a prison to live in it?"

"You must come and see the 'Fontanella'—so they call it—before you decide," said Julia. "Meanwhile here is a rough sketch I made from the garden side."

"Come, that looks very pretty, indeed," cried George. "Do you mean to say it is like that?"

"That's downright beautiful!" said Bramleigh. "Surely these are not marble—these columns?"

"It is all marble—the terraco, the balconies, the stairs, the door-frames; and as to the floors, they are laid down in variegated slabs, with a marvellous instinct as to colour and effect. I declare I think it handsomer than Castello," cried Nelly.

"Haven't I often said," exclaimed Bramleigh, "that there was nothing like being ruined to impart a fresh zest to existence? You seem to start anew in the race, and unweighted too."

"As George and I have always been in the condition you speak of," said Julia, "this charm of novelty is lost to us."

"Let us put it to the vote," said Nelly eagerly. "Shall we buy it?"

"First of all let us see it," interposed Bramleigh. "To-day I have to make my visit to the authorities. I have to present myself before the great officials, and announce that I have come to be the representative of the last joint of the British lion's tail; but that he being a great beast of wonderful strength and terrific courage, to touch a hair of him is temerity itself."

"And they will believe you?" asked Julia.

"Of course they will. It would be very hard that we should not survive in the memories of people who live in lonely spots and read no newspapers."

"Such a place for vegetation I never saw," cried Nelly. "There are no glass windows in the hall, but through the ornamental ironwork the oranges and limes pierce through and hang in great clusters; the whole covered with the crimson acanthus and the blue japonica, till the very brilliancy of colour actually dazzles you."

"We'll write a great book up there, George,—'Cattaro under the Doges': or shall it be a romance?" said Bramleigh.

"I'm for a diary," said Julia, "where each of us shall contribute his share of life among the wild-olives."

"Ju's right," cried Nelly; "and as I have no gift of authorship, I'll be the public."

"No, you shall be the editor, dearest," said Julia; "he is always like the Speaker in the House,—the person who does the least and endures the most."

"All this does not lead us to any decision," said L'Estrange. "Shall I go up there all alone, and report to you this evening what I see and what I think of the place?"

This proposal was at once acceded to; and now they went their several ways, not to meet again till a late dinner.

"How nobly and manfully your brother bears up," said Julia, as she walked back to the inn with Nelly.

"And there is no display in it," said Nelly, warmly. "Now that he is beyond the reach of condolence and compassion, he fears nothing. And you will see that when the blow falls, as he says it must, he will not wince nor shrink."

"If I had been a man, I should like to have been of that mould."

"And it is exactly what you would have been, dear Julia. Gusty said, only yesterday, that you had more courage than us all."

When L'Estrange returned, he came accompanied by an old man in very tattered clothes, and the worst possible hat, whose linen was far from spotless, as were his hands innocent of soap. He was, however, the owner of the villa, and a Count of the great family of Kreptowicz. If his appearance was not much in his favour, his manners were those of a well-bred person, and his language that of education. He was eager to part with this villa, as he desired to go and live with a married daughter at Ragusa; and he protested that, at the price he asked, it was not a sale, but a present; that to any other than Englishmen he never would part with a property that had been six hundred years in the family, and which contained the bones of his distinguished ancestors, of which, incidentally, he threw in small historic details; and, last of all, he avowed that he desired to confide the small chapel where these precious remains were deposited to the care of men of station and character. This chapel was only used once a year, when a mass for the dead was celebrated, so that the Count insisted no inconvenience could be incurred by the tenant. Indeed, he half hinted that, if that one annual celebration were objected to, his ancestors might be prayed for elsewhere, or even rest satisfied with the long course of devotion to their interests which had been maintained up to the present time. As for the chapel itself, he described it as a gem that even Venice could not rival. There were frescoes of marvellous beauty, and some carvings in wood and ivory that were priceless. Some years back, he had employed a great artist to restore some of the paintings, and supply the place of others that were beyond restoration, and now it was in a state of perfect condition, as he would be proud to show them.

"You are aware that we are heretics, Monsieur?" said Julia.

"We are all sons of Adam, Mademoiselle," said he, with a polite

bow ; and it was clear that he could postpone spiritual questions to such time as temporal matters might be fully completed.

As the chapel was fully twenty minutes' walk from the villa, and much higher on the mountain side, had it even been frequented by the country people it could not have been any cause of inconvenience to the occupants of the villa ; and this matter being settled, and some small conditions as to surrender being agreed to, Bramleigh engaged to take it for three years, with a power to purchase if he desired it.

Long after the contract was signed and completed, the old Count continued, in a half-complaining tone, to dwell on the great sacrifice he had made, what sums of money were to be made of the lemons and oranges, how the figs were celebrated even at Ragusa, and Fontanella melons had actually brought ten kreutzers—three-halfpence—apiece in the market at Zara.

" Who is it," cried Julia, as the old man took his leave, " who said that the old mercantile spirit never died out in the great Venetian families, and that the descendants of the doges, with all their pride of blood and race, were dealers and traders whenever an occasion of gain presented itself ? "

" Our old friend there has not belied the theory," said Bramleigh ; " but I am right glad that we have secured La Fontanella."

CHAPTER LI.

SOME NEWS FROM WITHOUT.

THERE is a sad significance in the fact that the happiest days of our lives are those most difficult to chronicle ; it is as though the very essence of enjoyment was its uneventful nature. Thus was it that the little household at the Fontanella felt their present existence. Its simple pleasures, its peacefulness never palled upon them. There was that amount of general similarity in tastes amongst them that secures concord, and that variety of disposition and temperament which promotes and sustains interest.

Julia was the life of all ; for though seeming to devote herself to the cares of housethrift and management, and in reality carrying on all the details of management, it was she who gave to their daily life its colour and flavour ; she who suggested occupations and interest to each ; and while Angustus was charged to devote his gun and his rod to the replenishment of the larder, George was converted into a gardener ; all the decorative department of the household being confided to Nelly, who made the bouquets for the breakfast and dinner-tables, arranged the fruit in artistic fashion, and was supreme in exacting dinner-dress and the due observance of all proper etiquette. Julia was inflexible on this point ; for, as she said, " though people laugh at deposed princes for their persistence in maintaining a certain state and a certain pageantry in their exile,

without these what becomes of their prestige, and what becomes of themselves? they merge into a new existence, and lose their very identity. We, too, may be 'restored' one of these days, and let it be our care not to have forgotten the habits of our station." There was in this, as in most she said, a semi-seriousness that made one doubt when she was in earnest; and this half-quizzing manner enabled her to carry out her will and bear down opposition in many cases where a sterner logic would have failed her.

Her greatest art of all, however, was to induce the others to believe that the chief charm of their present existence was its isolation. She well knew that while she herself and Nelly would never complain of the loneliness of their lives, their estrangement from the world and all its pursuits, its pleasures and its interests, the young men would soon discover what monotony marked their days, how uneventful they were, and how uniform. To convert all these into merits, to make them believe that this immunity from the passing accidents of life was the greatest of blessings, to induce them to regard the peace in which they lived as the highest charm that could adorn existence, and at the same time not suffer them to lapse into dreamy inactivity or lethargic indifference, was a great trial of skill, and it was hers to achieve it. As she said, not without a touch of vain-glory, one day to Nelly, "How intensely eager I have made them about small things. Your brother was up at daylight to finish his rock-work for the creepers, and George felled that tree for the keel of his new boat before breakfast. Think of that, Nelly; and neither of them as much as asked if the post had brought them letters and newspapers. Don't laugh, dearest. When men forget the post-hour, there is something wonderfully good or bad has befallen them."

"But it is strange, after all, Ju, how little we have come to care for the outer world. I protest I am glad to think that there are only two mails a week—a thing that when we came here led me to believe that it would not be possible to endure."

"To George and myself it matters little," said Julia, and her tone had a touch of sadness in it, in spite of her attempt to smile. "It would not be easy to find two people whom the world can live without at so little cost. There is something in that, Nelly; though I'm not sure that is all gain."

"Well, you have your recompence, Julia," said the other, affectionately, "for there is a little 'world' here could not exist without you."

"Two hares, and something like a black cock, they call it a caper," here cried Augustus from beneath the window. "Come down, and let us have breakfast on the terrace. By the way, I have just got a letter in Cutbill's hand. It has been a fortnight in coming, but I only glanced at the date of it."

As they gathered around the breakfast-table they were far more eager to learn what had been done in the garden and what progress was being made with the fish-pond, than to hear Mr. Cutbill's news, and his letter

lay open till nigh the end of the meal on the table before any one thought of it.

"Who wants to read Cutbill?" said Augustus, indolently.

"Not I, Gusty, if he write as he talks."

"Do you know, I thought him very pleasant?" said L'Estrange. "He told me so much that I had never heard of, and made such acute remarks on life and people."

"Poor dear George was so flattered by Mr. Cutbill's praise of his boiled mutton, that he took quite a liking to the man; and when he declared that some poor little wine we gave him had a flavour of 'Muscat' about it, like old Moselle, I really believe he might have borrowed money of us if he had wanted, and if we had had any."

"I wish you would read him aloud, Julia," said Augustus.

"With all my heart," said she, turning over the letter to see its length. "It does seem a long document, but it is a marvel of clear writing. Now for it:—'Naples, Hotel Victoria. My dear Bramleigh.' Of course you are his dear Bramleigh? Lucky, after all, that it's not dear Gusty."

"That's exactly what makes everything about that man intolerable to *me*," said Nelly. "The degree of intimacy between people is not to be measured by the inferior."

"I will have no discussions, no interruptions," said Julia. "If there are to be comments, they must be made by *me*."

"That's tyranny, I think," cried Nelly.

"I call it more than arrogance," said Augustus.

"My dear Bramleigh," continued Julia, reading aloud—"I followed the old viscount down here, not in the best of tempers, I assure you; and though not easily outwitted or baffled in such matters, it was not till after a week that I succeeded in getting an audience. There's no denying it, he's the best actor on or off the boards in Europe. He met me coldly, haughtily. I had treated him badly, forsooth, shamefully; I had not deigned a reply to any of his letters. He had written me three—he wasn't sure there were not four letters—to Rome. He had sent me cards for the Pope's chapel—cards for Cardinal Somebody's receptions—cards for a concert at St. Paul's, outside the walls. I don't know what attentions he had not showered on me, nor how many of his high and titled friends had not called at a hotel where I never stopped, or left their names with a porter I never saw. I had to wait till he poured forth all this with a grand eloquence, at once disdainful and damaging; the peroration being in this wise—that such lapses as mine were things unknown in the latitudes inhabited by well-bred people. 'These things are not done, Mr. Cutbill!' said he, arrogantly; 'these things are not done! You may call them trivial omissions, mere trifles, casual forgetfulnesses and such like; but even men who have achieved distinction, who have won fame and honours and reputation, as I am well aware is your case, would do well to observe the small obligations which the discipline of society enforces, and condescend to exchange that small coin of civilities which

form the circulating medium of good manners.' When he had delivered himself of this he sat down overpowered, and though I, in very plain language, told him that I did not believe a syllable about letters nor accept one word of the lesson, he only fanned himself and bathed his temples with rose-water, no more heeding me or my indignation than if I had been one of the figures on his Japanese screen.

" ' You certainly said you were stopping at the "Minerva," ' said he.

" ' I certainly told your lordship I was at Spilman's.'

" He wanted to show me why this could not possibly be the case—how men like himself never made mistakes, and men like me continually did so—that the very essence of great men's lives was to attach importance to those smaller circumstances that inferior people disregarded, and so on ; but I simply said, ' Let us leave that question where it is, and go on to a more important one. Have you had time to look over my account ? '

" ' If you had received the second of those letters you have with such unfeigned candour assured me were never written, you'd have seen that I only desire to know the name of your banker in town, that I may order my agent to remit the money.'

" ' Let us make no more mistakes about an address, my lord,' said I. ' I'll take a cheque for the amount now,' and he gave it. He sat down and wrote me an order on Hedges and Holt, Pall Mall, for fifteen hundred pounds.

" I was so overcome by the promptitude and by the grand manner he handed it to me, that I am free to confess I was heartily ashamed of my previous rudeness, and would have given a handsome discount off my cheque to have been able to obliterate all memory of my insolence.

" ' Is there anything more between us, Mr. Cutbill ? ' said he, politely, ' for I think it would be a mutual benefit if we could settle all our outlying transactions at the present interview.'

" ' Well,' said I, ' there's that two thousand of the parson's, paid in, if you remember, after Portlaw's report to your lordship that the whole scheme must founder.'

" He tried to browbeat at this. It was a matter in which I had no concern ; it was a question which Mr. L'Estrange was at full liberty to bring before the courts of law ; my statement about Portlaw was incorrect; dates were against me, law was against me, custom was against me, and at last it was nigh dinner-hour, and time was against me ; ' unless,' said he, with a change of voice I never heard equalled off the stage, ' you will stay and eat a very humble dinner with Temple and myself, for my lady is indisposed.'

" To be almost on fighting terms with a man ten minutes ago, and to accept his invitation to dinner now, seemed to me one of those things perfectly beyond human accomplishment ; but the way in which he tendered the invitation, and the altered tone he imparted to his manner, made me feel that not to imitate him was to stamp myself for ever as one of those vulgar dogs whom he had just been ridiculing, and I assented.

" I have a perfect recollection of a superb dinner, but beyond that, and that the champagne was decanted, and that there was a large cheese stuffed with truffles, and that there were ortolans in ice, I know nothing. It was one of the pleasantest evenings I ever passed in my life. I sang several songs, and might have sung more if a message had not come from my lady to beg that the piano might be stopped, an intimation which closed the *séance*, and I said good-night. The next morning Temple called to say my lord was too much engaged to be able to receive me again, and as to that little matter I had mentioned, he had an arrangement to propose which might be satisfactory; and whether it was that my faculties were not the clearer for my previous night's convivialities, or that Temple's explanations were of the most muddled description, or that the noble lord had purposely given him a tangled skein to unravel, I don't know, but all I could make out of the proposed arrangement was that he wouldn't give any money back—no, not on any terms: to do so would be something so derogatory to himself, to his rank, to his position in diplomacy; it would amount to a self-accusation of fraud; what would be thought of him by his brother peers, by society, by the world, and by THE OFFICE?

" He had, however, the alternate presentation to the living of Oxington in Herts. It was two hundred and forty pounds per annum and a house—in fact 'a provision more than ample,' he said, 'for any man not utterly a worldling.' He was not sure whether the next appointment lay with himself or a certain Sir Marcus Cluff—a retired fishmonger, he thought,—then living at Rome; but so well as I could make out, if it was Lord Culduff's turn he would appoint L'Estrange, and if it was Cluff's, we were to cajole, or to bully, or to persuade him out of it; and L'Estrange was to be inducted as soon as the present incumbent, who only wanted a few months of ninety, was promoted to a better place. This may all seem very confused, dim, and unintelligible, but it is a plain ungarbled statement in comparison with what I received from Temple—who, to do him justice, felt all the awkwardness of being sent out to do something he didn't understand by means that he never possessed. He handed me, however, a letter for Cluff from the noble viscount, which I was to deliver at once; and, in fact, this much was intelligible, that the sooner I took myself away from Naples, in any direction I liked best, the better. There are times when it is as well not to show that you see the enemy is cheating you, when the shrewdest policy is to let him deem you a dupe and wait patiently till he has compromised himself beyond recall. In this sense I agreed to be the bearer of the letter, and started the same night for Rome.

Cluff was installed at the same hotel where I was stopping, and I saw him the next morning. He was a poor broken-down creature, sitting in a room saturated with some peculiar vapour which seemed to agree with him, but half suffocated me. The viscount's letter, however, very nearly put us on a level, for it took his breath away, and all but finished him.

" 'Do you know, sir,' said he, 'that Lord Culduff talks here of a title

to a presentation that I bought with the estate thirty years ago, and that he has no more right in the matter than he has to the manor-house. The vicarage is in my sole gift, and though the present incumbent is but two-and-thirty, he means to resign and go out to New Zealand.' He mandered on about Lord Culduff's inexplicable blunder; what course he ought to adopt towards him; if it were actionable, or if a simple apology would be the best solution, and at last said, 'There was no one for whom he had a higher esteem than Mr. L'Estrange, and that if I would give him his address he would like to communicate with him personally in the matter.' This looked at least favourable, and I gave it with great willingness; but I am free to own I have become now so accustomed to be jockeyed at every step I go, that I wouldn't trust the Pope himself, if he only promised me anything beyond his blessing.

"I saw Cluff again to-day, and he said he had half written his letter to L'Estrange; but being his ante-fumigation day, when his doctor enjoined complete repose, he could not complete or post the document till Saturday. I have thought it best, however, to apprise you, and L'Estrange through you, that such a letter is on its way to Cattaro, and I trust with satisfactory intelligence. And now that I must bring this long narrative to an end, I scarcely know whether I shall repeat a scandal you may have heard already, or more probably still, like to hear now, but it is the town-talk here: that Pracontal, or Count Bramleigh,—I don't know which name he is best known by—is to marry Lady Augusta. Some say that the marriage will depend on the verdict of the trial being in his favour; others declare that she has accepted him unconditionally. I was not disposed to believe the story, but Cluff assures me that it is unquestionable, and that he knows a lady to whom Lady Augusta confided this determination. And, as Cluff says, such an opportunity of shocking the world will not occur every day, and it cannot be expected she could resist the temptation.

"I am going back to England at once, and I enclose you my town address in case you want me: '4, Joy Court, Cannon Street.' The Culduff mining-scheme is now wound up, and the shareholders have signed a consent. Their first dividend of fourpence will be paid in January, future payment will be announced by notice. Tell L'Estrange, however, not to 'come in,' but to wait.

"If I can be of service in any way, make use of me, and if I cannot, don't forget me, but think me as, what I once overheard L'Estrange's sister call me,—a well-meaning snob, and very faithfully yours,

"T. CUTBILL."

Under the Sea.

THE sea has claimed excessive tribute of human life, human handiwork, and human wealth, ever since men began to go down thither in ships. It would be interesting, were it possible, to calculate how much of the world's treasure has from time to time gone to pave the ocean, from the Arctic to the Antarctic. Shakspeare, reflecting upon this subject, and wishing to convey the idea of great wealth, speaks in *Henry the Fifth* of the riches of

The ooze and bottom of the sea

With sunken wreck and sunless treasures ;

while he makes Clarence, in *Richard the Third*, dream of

A thousand fearful wrecks—

Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,

Inestimable stones, invalued jewels,

All scattered in the bottom of the sea.

In the infancy of navigation, when ships were rarely taken out of sight of land, the rudeness and simplicity of the appliances for guiding and managing vessels made wrecks matters of very frequent occurrence. The enormous losses which must in those times have been suffered would, it might be supposed, have turned attention to recovering a part at least of the treasures so frequently engulfed. It is only, however, within a comparatively recent period that serious attempts have been made in this direction, and so successful has been the enterprise engaged, that now-a-days, unless a ship is sunk far away out at sea, in almost unfathomable depths, a total loss rarely results.

The simple process of diving, unassisted by mechanical appliance, has of course long been in practice. We find, however, no mention of it in the Bible; for although the occurrence of the word "pearl" in the Book of Job might raise the supposition that pearl-diving was known to the Jews, the commentators—Dr. Kitto amongst the number—have quarrelled with the translation, contending that the Hebrew word should have been rendered "crystal," and not pearl. However, diving for oysters was practised in the time of Homer, as in the sixteenth book of the *Iliad* Patroclus, having slain Hector's charioteer, taunts him for falling headlong from his seat like a diver, and tells him that he dives to the ground in the same manner as a diver goes into the sea to grope for oysters. The next ancient author who refers to diving is *Aeschylus*, who in *The Suppliants* speaks of the clear-sighted eye which may, without dizziness, reach the bottom of deep persevering thought like a diver. The first record we have of the employment of divers for any other purpose than oyster-fishing is to be found in *Thucydides*, who relates that in the expedition of the Greeks

against Syracuse, divers were called into requisition to saw asunder the wooden stockades which had been placed under water at the mouth of the harbour, to prevent the Greek ships from entering. Livy, in the forty-fourth book of his history, gives the earliest instance of what now forms the chief business of the modern application of diving, namely, the recovery of money and valuables not of a perishable nature. A.u.c. 588, or 170 years before the Christian era, Perseus ordered his generals Andronicus and Nicias to throw the treasures of Pella into the sea, and to burn the arsenals of Thessalonica. Andronicus delayed the execution of his part of the command, but Nicias obeyed only too faithfully. Perseus changed his mind upon the matter, whereupon Nicias set to work, and by the agency of divers recovered almost all the treasure he had sunk. Perseus hearing of this, and anxious that there should be no living witnesses of his irresolution and folly, had Nicias and the divers put to death. So runs the story, which is illustrative, at all events, of Talleyrand's remark about zeal. The tricks which Antony and Cleopatra played each other by the aid of divers will be in the recollection of readers of Plutarch and Shakspeare. Antony, whilst angling with Cleopatra, had engaged one of his assistants to dive and put upon his hook such fish as had been caught before. Cleopatra discovering this, sent down another diver, who placed a *salt* fish upon the hook ; and says Charmian to Cleopatra in the play—

"Twas merry when

You wagered on your angling ; when your diver
Did hang a salt fish on his hook, which he
With fervency drew up.

At about this time divers would seem to have been a recognized body of workmen, for Manilius wrote (A.D. 12) in the fifth book of his astronomical epic, not only of those who submerged themselves in the sea, seeking the caves of the water-nymphs, but of those who snatched its spoil of wrecks from the deep and examined the sea-bed with eyes anxious in search of lost treasure. We find even that their scale of recompence was fixed by law. Among the Rhodians they were paid upon a scale regulated by the depth to which they had to dive ; while the Digest provides that the property recovered should be returned to the merchant who originally owned it, a percentage of remuneration being allowed for the diver. Some of these men must have been persons of consideration, since among the ancient inscriptions collected by Gudius are two relating to Romans in this condition of life. One has reference to Onochrysus, a diver residing in *via Ostiensis*, and the other to Thumnus, a fisherman and diver living in *via Portuenti*.

Homer's oyster-fisher may be supposed to have employed a method of working similar to that of the Ceylon pearl-divers, who with a stone of sixty pounds weight attached to their feet, descend to the bottom of the sea, heap all the loose rubbish within reach into their baskets, and then pull a rope as a signal to haul up, seldom remaining under water more than a minute, and never more than two minutes ; although there are fables like

that of the diver from the province of Travancore, in Hindostan, who stayed in the water for six minutes. Even after the usual dip of one minute, which is repeated forty or fifty times in the day, blood frequently flows from the mouths and ears of the men. The only devices used by these Ceylon divers are rubbing their bodies with oil, stuffing their ears and noses, or carrying a sponge filled with oil in their mouths; and these are of no particular efficacy, or, at all events, do not enable them to remain under water longer than usual. On this point the only credible accounts fix the limit at two minutes. The present writer visiting a provincial music-hall lately, saw a man remain at the bottom of a tank filled with water (the tank was placed upon the stage, and, by means of a lime-light thrown from above and a glass front, all the movements of the swimmer could be seen) for a minute and a half, to the almost painful excitement of the spectators. It is related that Mr. Brunel, during the construction of the Thames Tunnel, went down in a diving-bell to inspect some of the works. He left the bell to look at a fault in the masonry, and remained away in the water for two minutes, to the great alarm of his friends. He explained his power to do this by the supposition that the air of the bell, which had sunk thirty feet, was so compressed, that when he left it he had taken in twice the amount of respirable fluid that he would under ordinary circumstances if he had left the upper air and gone at once into the water.

Such artificial aids to submarine exploration as were possessed by the ancients were of the simplest description. It is said that in Paris there are some ancient marbles on which men are depicted as swimming under water with vessels in the shape of bladders over their mouths, their bodies of course being weighted according to circumstances. Aristotle speaks of a description of kettle in use among divers to enable them to remain the longer under water; while we have the secondary evidence of Roger Bacon for the fact that Alexander was possessed of some artificial means of seeking out the secrets of the deep. Pliny also speaks of divers engaged to assist the stratagems of ancient warfare, who carried on their operations under water, having in their mouths a long pipe, the top or funnel of which was made to float, and thus communicate air to the divers. To meet such devices as this, the defenders would place nets across the river or channel, and plant here and there wooden snags having sharp pieces of iron or the blades of swords sticking out of them. In one of the oldest editions of Vegetius' *De Re Militari*, the annotator has added some illustrations from which he wishes us to infer that in the time of his author, *circa A.D. 380*, there was a diving apparatus in use for catching fish, a conclusion to which we altogether demur from what we know of the conditions of fish-catching. The apparatus consisted of a cap or helmet, fitting close to the head of the diver, to which was attached a leathern pipe communicating with the air, by the top being constructed to float on the water. This is evidently derived from Pliny's relation. This method of getting air down to the divers afforded a hint to Mr. Scott Russell in the construction of his ill-fated submarine vessel, the *Nautilus*.

Friar Bacon was the first Englishman to suggest appliances of a scientific nature to aid in submarine explorations. In his *Discoveries of the Miracles of Art, Nature, and Magic* (*circa A.D. 1252*), Chapter IV., "of admirable artificial instruments," he says, "a man may make an engine whereby, without any corporal danger, he may walk at the bottom of the sea or other waters;" but he does not enter into details upon the project, and for three centuries no action was taken upon the hint he threw out. From the sixteenth century to the present time, however, the ingenuity of inventors has been applied to the object of overcoming the difficulties of carrying on useful submarine operations, and their projects seem to have divided themselves into three classes: namely, diving-vessels to be navigated under water with the same facility as on the surface, the diving-bell, and the modern diving-dress. Notwithstanding the patient efforts of inventors, the first class may be declared, up to the present time, practical failures, while the other two are engaged in active work, and enter much more largely into all the purposes of modern enterprise than the generality of people are apt to suppose.

In the reign of James I., one Cornelius Debrell planned a vessel which should carry twelve rowers besides passengers, and which should be navigated under water, with the idea which has prompted this sort of invention throughout, of operating without being observed upon the ships of the enemy in time of war. We cannot make out whether the experiment was carried into effect or not. One account is, however, circumstantial in the affirmative, as it purports to be the relation of one of the men who rowed the boat when it was tried in the Thames. Debrell pretended to have discovered a subtle liquor, the distillation of which from a bottle enabled him to correct the impurities of the air already breathed by the rowers, and to render it fit again for respiration. This invention he kept secret. It was, however, said to have been discovered by Boyle, who obtained his information from the physician who married Debrell's daughter; but at any rate the mystery of manufacturing this wondrous *elixir vite* passed away with Boyle and the physician, and no one has happened upon it since. Attempts were subsequently made on behalf of the Landgrave of Hesse to accomplish the same object. The model selected was Debrell's vessel, which was a wooden tub of an elliptical shape, six feet high, and supplied with air by pipes communicating with the surface. The descent and ascent of the vessel were regulated by means of a compartment into which water was introduced when it was desired to go down, and from which it was expelled when an ascent was to be made. It was constructed to contain over a hundred cubic feet of air, and upon a calculation that as thirty-two cubic feet would last a diver an hour, four persons could remain in the vessel for that period without the necessity of drawing air from above. A full description of this vessel will be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for December, 1747. In the same Magazine for 1749, mention is made of a vessel constructed by one Symons, in 1729. It appears to have been made of a size to contain

sufficient air to last one man three-quarters of an hour, was water-tight, and was made to sink by a certain calculated weight of lead. Symons himself sunk the boat to the bottom of the Dart, and remained there for nearly an hour ; but the vessel of course was a simple curiosity without practical qualities. Symons complains that on the occasion of exhibiting his vessel in the Dart, he only received five shillings, although there was a large number of persons present. In 1774 a check was put upon this description of experiment by the fate of John Day. He appears to have so far improved upon Symons's model that he actually is said to have sunk himself in thirty feet of water in a pool near Norwich, and to have remained there for twenty-four hours. His only plan of turning this to account was by getting large bets made that he would not sink a ship a hundred yards deep in the sea (a thing of course out of the question, as the pressure of the water at that depth would have burst in the sides) and remain there for twenty-four hours. The *Sporting Kalender* was examined, and a Mr. Blake fixed upon as the gentleman who should get the bets on. He took the matter up, and large wagers were laid that a vessel which should remain in a hundred *feet*, not yards, for twenty-four hours, would not be produced in three months. Day was not ready with his vessel in time, and Mr. Blake lost the bets, although he did not lose confidence in Day. For Mr. Blake's satisfaction, the vessel was completed : Day was closed up tightly therein and provided with a watch, a taper, some biscuits, and a bottle of water, with which he was to remain twenty-four hours at the bottom. The experiment took place in Plymouth Sound, in twenty-two fathoms of water. Poor Day went down, but neither he nor his vessel was ever more heard of, in spite of every exertion that was made for his recovery. It is supposed that the man, having no practical knowledge of the pressure of water at that depth, had not made his vessel strong enough, and that as soon as it got to the bottom it cracked up like an egg-shell, especially as some ripples were seen to rise on the surface just after he went down. How he proposed to obtain the means of respiration we have not discovered, and we should be slightly inclined to doubt the truth of the alleged rehearsal near Norwich.

In 1787, a Mr. Bushnell, of Connecticut, is said to have constructed a vessel which could be moved under water, and by means of which a magazine of powder could be placed at the bottom of a ship and fired. We have no record of the result of this; but Citizen St. Aubin, a Paris man of letters and a member of the tribunate, gave an account, in 1802, of the *bateau plongeur* of Mr. Fulton, also an American. Experiments were made with this vessel, in which a compartment to contain sufficient air for eight men during eight hours was contrived, in the harbours of Havre and Brest. The compass points were proved under water, and the boat made way to the extent of half a league. Above all, Fulton added to his boat a machine by means of which he actually did blow up a large boat in Brest Harbour. Attempts have been made in this direction of late years both by Mr. Scott Russell and Mr. W. E. Newton. It is not so long since that the *Nautilus*—de-

signed by Mr. Scott Russell for submarine navigation, and specially intended by him for operations against the Russian ships in the time of the Crimean war—lay high and dry in the yard at Millwall. We believe it had actually been accepted for service by the Admiralty, but the end of the war came before the vessel could prove its utility; and, perhaps we should say happily, it has remained since without employment. The principle of the vessel with respect to its rising and sinking was similar to that we have pointed out in the case of Debrall's ship. When it was intended to sink, certain compartments were filled with water, which was expelled when the voyagers wished to rise. The air supply was drawn through a pipe, the top or funnel of which floated on the water, a device which resembles that mentioned by Pliny and the annotator of Vegetius, and was actually adopted at the end of the last century by Kleingert of Breslau. The *Nautilus* was fitted with compasses and the other scientific appliances of navigation, and she was rowed from outside by men in diving dresses, who were supplied with air from the inside of the vessel. The great danger of course was of accident to the floating funnel. Experiments were made in Portsmouth Harbour which proved that the vessel could be employed in placing torpedoes underneath ships. In 1857, Mr. W. E. Newton, of London, made some experiments with a vessel which, upon the old model of such ships, was to contain a supply of air sufficient to last a certain number of men a certain time; but we have not heard that Mr. Newton has carried his plans to the point of success; and the same remark applies to the design of Dr. Payerne, mentioned in the catalogue of the Paris Exhibition of 1855, for constructing a submarine vessel with a chemical contrivance for manufacturing fresh air out of the original air supply of the vessel when it becomes vitiated. If this could be accomplished, the grand difficulty of all such schemes would be obviated; but the account we read of Dr. Payerne's proposals did not imbue us with a very sanguine idea of their practicability.

The learned, ingenious, and eccentric Bishop Wilkins has allowed his fancy to run wild about submarine navigation. His reflections upon the subject, suggested by the before-mentioned vessel of Debrall, will be found in his *Mathematical Magic*. He has imagined a ship which he calls *Wilkins' Mercury*, or the *Secret Swift Messenger*, and which, according to his view, could do all manner of things possible and impossible. Upon this matter the learned bishop seems to have been imbued with the true spirit of a Lagado projector. He is rather cloudy in his notions as to the manner of supplying the vessel with air, but evidently relies upon Debrall's quintessence for purifying and renewing the vitiated atmosphere; although he has no idea whatever of how the "quintessence" was composed or how it was to be obtained. He makes one exceedingly funny suggestion for lighting his submarine vessels. Their lamps are to be fed with oil extracted from fish caught by the submarine travellers *en route*. This is of a piece with the remainder of his speculations, which are thus summed up: Such a vessel, he says, would ensure privacy. A man might go to any

coast of the world, invisibly, without being discovered or prevented in his journey. The vessel would be safe from the uncertainty of tides and the violence of tempests, which never affect the sea above five or six paces deep; from pirates, ice, frosts, &c.; it would blow up enemies' ships, would convey supplies secretly to any besieged place, and could be extensively employed in submarine experiments and discoveries. The bishop supposed that the voyagers could obtain supplies of water from fresh springs which they would discover at the bottom of the sea. All kinds of arts could be carried on in such a vessel; learned observations could be made and printed therein. Several colonies might thus inhabit, having their children who could not choose but to be amazed upon the discovery of the upper world. So we should think. The bishop has allowed his hobby to run riot, but the visionary nature of his speculations accords well with the abortive efforts which have been made to carry out such projects.

It is pleasant to turn from this purely speculative aspect of submarine experiment to those in which we may contemplate its services to commerce and to mankind. Practically the art is of too recent a date in its safe and perfect form for it to have rendered much aid to scientific investigation and discovery; but that it will soon render valuable assistance in this direction, there is no doubt whatever. The diving-bell was the first perfected form of diving apparatus, but its history has been so often written, and its method of working is so well known through the Polytechnic lectures and experiments, that it is unnecessary for us to enter into any common details here. The saying of there being in things evil a soul of goodness, was never more signally exemplified than in the case of Philip's Armada. With its political effects upon this country the students of history will be familiar; but it is at least singular that the richly freighted Spanish galleons which were sunk near our coasts during the storm which destroyed the Armada should have given an impetus to diving operations which has even yet not ceased to operate. The dreams of divers for the last three centuries have been of the Spanish doubloons which pave the sea bottom in many parts of our coasts. Within the present century large sums of Spanish money have been recovered, and every diver has his pet scheme for making further investigations which may lead him on to fortune and affluence. As early as 1588 the Marquis of Argyll obtained a royal patent, entitling him to all the treasure he could recover from the Spanish ships sunk off the Isle of Mull. For this purpose he employed James Colquhon, of Glasgow, who went down and examined the ships, air being supplied to him by a leather pipe; but nothing was recovered. Nearly eighty years afterwards, men's minds having been much excited in the meantime, the then Duke of Argyll, in whom the original patent was vested, renewed the operations, which were facilitated by a rude kind of diving-bell on the principle to be found in the scientific apparatus of the present day. After a great deal of trouble, however, only three guns about eight feet long and eight inches in diameter were recovered, and the attempt was again abandoned. The Spanish gold at the bottom of the sea off the Mull

coast had, however, set in motion the spirit of invention which has carried its results forward to the present condition of the diving art. Diving has its romance as well as other departments of human effort. In 1680, nearly a century after the patent of the Marquis of Argyll, one William Phipps, having contrived a square iron box, open at the bottom, with windows and an inside seat for the divers (which is precisely the present arrangement, except that the air is now continually renewed from above, whereas in this machine the stay was limited by the supply of air in the bell), persuaded Charles II. to fit out a ship to enable him to recover some Spanish treasure sunk off Hispaniola. Spanish gold again! His first attempt was a failure, but in 1687, assisted with funds by Monk, Duke of Albemarle, Phipps succeeded in recovering 200,000*l.* from the wrecks. On his return he was knighted, and from this persevering diver have descended the Mulgraves of diplomatic history. In 1688 great assistance was rendered to those who were engaged in attempting to overcome the practical difficulties of diving by the speculations of George Sinclair, a learned mathematician of Edinburgh. In his *Hydrostatica, or Natural Philosophy improved by Experiments*, he published a series of calculations which were intended to check rash and unsafe experiments. He showed how the depth to which a vessel of a certain strength could descend was limited by the pressure of the water, and also established a rule for estimating the size of a bell to contain a certain quantity of air for a given number of men to remain in a certain time. If some of the foolish men who lost their lives subsequently had consulted Sinclair, they might have spared themselves the catastrophe. The difficulty of renewing the supply of air was overcome in 1715 by Halley the astronomer. He had an escape-cock fitted to the top of the bell, and had a service of barrels which were sent down to the bottom full of air. These were emptied into the bell, and a continuous air-supply secured. In 1783 Mr. Spalding of Edinburgh, who had made some improvements upon the mechanical arrangement of Halley's bell, but had retained the barrel air-service, engaged to recover some of the cargo of an East Indiaman which had been sunk off the Kish Bank, Ireland. He and his assistant went down, and after the first supply of air was supposed to have been exhausted, the barrels were sent down as usual. No signal having been given for some time, the bell was drawn up, and Mr. Spalding and his assistant were found to be dead. It is supposed that by some means they failed to discharge the air from the barrels into the bell, and were consequently suffocated. The barrel service was always more or less dangerous from its liability to get out of gear; and if Spalding had but adopted the invention of Smeaton, the engineer of the Eddystone Lighthouse, he would in all probability not have lost his life in the manner he did. In 1779 Smeaton applied the pneumatic forcing-pump to the diving-bell. The air was by this machine communicated to the bell from the deck of the ship—the apparatus being connected with the bell by a flexible tube, kept open against the pressure of the water by a spiral brass wire running from end to end. This

appliance of Smeaton has been universally adopted, and now all diving operations are conducted with air supplied by this method. Smeaton was the first to apply the diving-bell, upon the improved principle of construction now adopted, and invented by Smeaton himself, to the purposes of submarine engineering, of which it is so important an element that hardly any dock-works, bridge-building, the erection of piers and breakwaters, and operations of that nature are conducted without its assistance. Smeaton himself used it in repairing the foundations of Hoxham Bridge; it enabled Rennie to complete the gigantic works at Ramsgate Harbour and jotty; it was instrumental in clearing away the obstructions in the Clyde, and, in consequence, of facilitating the navigation between Glasgow and Greenock; and only in 1863 two rocks named respectively the Cow and the Calf, which had for many years impeded the navigation of the Menai Straits between Holyhead and the Isle of Anglesey, were removed by the agency of divers and the diving-bell. The sea-wall of the Royal William Victualling-house at Plymouth, a work of great magnitude and difficulty, was accomplished by the same means, which are now in active operation on the breakwater works at Dover, Plymouth, and elsewhere.

Useful, however, as the diving-bell may be, it is obvious that for some time past it has been losing ground before an invention, perfected little more than half a century since, which has made really gigantic strides in public estimation and which is now almost universally used in submarine engineering—we mean the diving-dress. It is of this invention that the jurors of the department of Marine Engineering in the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1865 say, “The problem of diving seems to have been practically solved. The apparatus is capable of improvement no doubt, but it is in principle adequate to all submarine work at present carried on.” Many attempts were made in the last century to construct an apparatus which should enable the diver to work independently of the bell, and the favourite notion seems to have been to encase the upper part of the diver's body in a leathern chest sufficiently large to contain a supply of air for a certain period. Towards the end of the century, however, we begin to discern the rude outlines of the highly efficient dress now in use. We have seen that Smeaton in 1779 had applied the forcing air-pump to the diving-bell, and in *Hutton's Philosophical Dictionary*, published in 1795, we find a description of a diving-dress, or armour, as it is called, supplied with air by a forcing-pump. Borelli it was who invented a head-piece or helmet, of about two feet in diameter, which enclosed the head of the diver, and which, having been connected with a goatskin suit worn by the diver, drew its air supply through pipes in communication with a forcing air-pump. Another dress was invented about the same time by one Kleingert of Breslau. He had a cylindrical head-piece of strong tin plate and a body-armour of the same metal reaching from underneath the arms to the hips. The diver was encased first of all in a leathern jacket and drawers of the same material reaching to the knees, and to these the helmet and body-armour were buttoned so as to render the suit air-tight. The air-supply

was drawn through a pipe which was connected with the mouth of the diver by an ivory mouth-piece, the surface end being simply held above the water after the old style mentioned by the annotator of *Vegetius*. The foul air escaped through another pipe, likewise held above the water. The inhalation being by the mouth, and the exhalation by the nostrils, the act of inhalation caused the chest to expand and so expel the foul air through the escape-pipe. By the inhaling-pipe the diver could speak to those above. Previously to going down the diver was weighted, and when he wished to ascend he released one of the weights, which he attached to a rope held in his left hand. A few years afterwards one Tonkin, by uniting the schemes of Borelli and Kleingert—that is to say, by applying Borelli's forcing air-pump to Kleingert's armour—produced a dress and apparatus which in all their main features are identical with those now in use and by means of which he recovered 60,000*l.* in dollars from the *Abergavenny*, an East Indiaman, which had been sunk near Weymouth some eight years before, afterwards blowing up the wreck so as to prevent the formation of shoals. The radical defects of Borelli's and Kleingert's dresses were that they afforded no means of resisting the enormous pressure of water which begins to operate at a comparatively small depth. Borelli's goatskin suit could not be used below three fathoms depth, since the forcing-pump was not sufficiently well constructed to enable it to give a supply in the dress to resist the outward pressure of the water. The consequence was that if the diver went lower than three fathoms he ran the risk of being suffocated by the pressure on all parts of his body except that protected by the helmet. Kleingert's body-armour was intended to obviate this, but as by his invention the fresh air was immediately inhaled by the diver and was not diffused over the whole of the dress so as to present a resisting medium, the dress, even with Tonkin's improvements, could not be used below seven fathoms. It was reserved for Mr. A. Siebe, the submarine engineer of Denmark Street, Soho, in conjunction with Messrs. J. and C. Deane, to overcome all these difficulties, and to present us with a dress which is adapted for all the work of diving to a depth of 160 feet.

In 1829, Charles and John Deane, the most celebrated of those who have engaged of late years in the practical work of diving, undertook to recover the wreck of the *Cambria Castle*, an East Indiaman, which had been wrecked in twenty-eight feet of water off the Isle of Wight. Their apparatus was of a very homely character, and appears to have been devised under the necessity which ingenious men in want of capital are apt to experience. The dress consisted simply of a leathern head-piece, which was supplied with air through a pipe connected with the nozzle of a huge pair of bellows. The water would, of course, be excluded by the air supply of the helmet; but although the operations were attended with complete success, the obvious impossibility of descending to any considerable depth, induced Mr. Siebe to join with Messrs. Deane in perfecting improvements in the dress. The consequence was the adoption of the open diving-dress, consisting of an iron helmet which was supplied in the

usual manner by an air-pump, and connected with the dress, but open below. With this dress Mr. C. A. Deane, in 1834, descended to the wreck of the *Royal George*, sunk at Spithead in 1782, in ninety-eight feet of water, and by bringing up a large number of cannon, initiated the work afterwards undertaken of removing the wreck from the harbour. The operations upon the *Royal George* were conducted at first with the open dress, but the risk of the diver slipping and lowering the helmet so as to allow the water to rush in, was considered too great to render the universal use of the open dress possible. It is certain that one of the Sappers engaged in the diving operations upon the *Royal George*, who was using the open dress, would have been drowned but for the timely discovery of the accident. This defect led to the adoption of the close diving helmet and apparatus now in use, which, however, is but a reversion in principle to the improved apparatus of Tonkin before mentioned. There has been so much controversy as to whom the various alterations and improvements are due, that we will not pretend to adjudge upon the matter.

The diver, when about to commence work, puts on a guernsey, a pair of drawers, and one or more pairs of stockings, as circumstances may require. Over these he draws a garment, made of sheet india-rubber placed between two thicknesses of canvas so made as to envelope the whole body from the neck to the feet. Round each wrist he places a band of vulcanized india-rubber to guard against the ingress of the water. The effect of this pressure upon the wrist is often to numb the hand by impeding the circulation of the blood; and divers have been known to work for a considerable time after having a finger-nail torn off, an accident which has only been revealed on their coming to the surface. To prevent the dress from being chafed by the heavy boots he is obliged to wear, the diver puts on a pair of rough stockings outside the dress, and over these his boots, each of which is soled with lead to the weight of ten pounds to assist him in steadyng his movements, which would otherwise be impeded by the buoyancy of water at great depths. He then draws over his head, covering all parts except the face, a woollen cap, to protect him against the draught from the pumping through the upper-air pipe. Finally, he puts on a helmet of polished copper, which fits on to a metal band attached to the dress, and which is then screwed hermetically tight with wing nuts. The helmet has three glasses, one in the front, and one at each side, to enable the diver to have a comprehensive view of what he is about. These glasses are protected from accident by transverse iron bars. An accident by the breaking of a glass is not so serious as might at first sight appear, since the pressure of air from the inside of the helmet would resist the rush of the water long enough, at all events, to enable the diver to make himself secure. These glasses can be screwed off the helmet, and the front is not fixed on until the diver is ready to descend, and the helmet has been connected with the air-pump. We have heard a diver say that when the helmet is new it is so highly polished that the fish, attracted by the light reflected from it, frequently come bobbing

against it in their curiosity to know who their new companion is. The men who dive for pearls in the Scotch lakes insist that during their work they often have shoals of great lake-trout swimming about them. The helmet, however, soon blackens with the action of the water. When equipped in this head-piece, the diver has somewhat the appearance about the upper part of one of the Tower men-in-armour. The helmet is fitted with a foul-air valve, so arranged that the water cannot enter, but which provides for the egress of the vitiated air. In connection with the fresh-air pipe, which is fixed on to the back of the helmet, is a self-acting or safety valve, which, if any accident should happen by the breaking of the pipe, will close the helmet to the ingress of water and enable the diver to have sufficient air in the dress to last him until he extricates himself from his dangerous position. He is immediately apprised of such a mishap by the cessation of the great rushing noise which accompanies the working of the pump. The air-pipe, of vulcanized india-rubber, kept open from end to end by a brass spiral wire, is screwed on to the helmet at the back, passed under the left arm of the diver, and connected with the air-pump. A rope signal-line is passed round the diver's body and under his right arm, the other end being held by those operating on the surface. He is further equipped with a stout leathern belt, to which is attached a short double-edged knife or dagger, and also with two leaden weights, calculated, of course, with respect to the depth to which he has to descend, and these are equally disposed before and behind over his shoulders. Mr. Siebe's arrangements have been made so that these weights can be slipped instantly if the diver should lose his way and wish to rise to the surface. Great care, however, has to be exercised in selecting this method of getting out of a difficulty, as the immediate effect of slipping these heavy weights is that the diver rises to the surface almost as swiftly as if he had been shot out of a gun. On one occasion, a diver who dropped one of his weights by accident, came to the surface with such force as to overset a small boat. The strength of the copper helmet may be judged from the fact that on this occasion it was simply deeply indented. One of the Mersey Docks divers was lately struck by the paddle of a steamer, and although he was so much injured as to be confined to the hospital for some time, the blow did not break the helmet. The necessity for slipping the weights is, however, reduced to a minimum by the use of the signal or life-line. In ordinary cases, when the diver is ready to descend, a rope-ladder, heavily weighted, is attached to the boat, and by this the diver reaches the bottom.

The operations upon the surface of the water are usually conducted from a large flat or lighter. To the deck of this is screwed the air-pump, and immediately the diver disappears, the working of the pump commences. The pump now in use is a highly finished piece of workmanship, and is kept in a box to guard against accidents. It has three cylinders, with what is called a three-throw crank, by which a continuous supply of air, greater indeed than is ever required, is obtained. The cylinders are so

arranged as to communicate with the outer air, and while one is discharging into the pipe the others are filling from without, and so on *ad infinitum*. Mr. Siebe has added to his pump a cistern of water, which surrounds the cylinders and keeps the air cool, a matter of vast importance in hot climates. He has also invented a pressure gauge, by which the depth at which the diver is working can be ascertained, and the air supply regulated—the greater the depth the greater the quantity of air required to enable the dress to resist the pressure of the water. Stationed on the deck by the side of the pumbers is a man whose functions are important, and whose vigilance must be incessant, since upon him depends in many cases the life of the diver. He has possession of the surface end of the life-line, and carries on a sort of code telegraphy with the diver. He has from time to time to communicate with the diver by pulling the rope, and if no answer is given the diver must be hauled up immediately, as he may have gone off into a fainting-fit, or, as happened to old Charles Deane, have dropped into a comfortable nap. The code is simple. One pull of the life-line from the diver means "all right;" two pulls, "send down slings," (to attach to the articles which are to be recovered); three pulls, "send down basket;" four pulls, "haul up goods found." Another man is stationed at the air-pipe, to whom one pull signifies "all right;" two pulls, "more air," (the pump must then be worked faster); three pulls, "haul in the slack of the pipe;" four pulls, "haul up diver." The diver is provided with a heavy crowbar to lift goods about with, and this bar, which on the surface is quite unwieldy, becomes light and manageable at a certain depth of water. The diver adopts a crab-like method of walking, since the effect of his going straight ahead in dark water might be to come into collision with something that would break the glasses of the helmet.

The greatest depth to which a diver can descend with the present appliances in safety is about 160 feet, and for this a burden of one hundred-weight must be disposed about his person. The average depth at which he can work comfortably is about ninety feet, which was near the depth at which the operations upon the *Royal George* were conducted. In water from sixty to seventy feet deep, the men can work for two hours at a time, coming up for ten minutes' rest, and doing a day's work of six or seven hours. An English diver encased in one of Siebe's dresses, went down in the Mediterranean to a depth of 165 feet, and remained there for twenty-five minutes; and we have heard that Green, the American diver, inspected a wreck in one of the Canadian lakes at a depth of 170 feet; but his experience was enough to convince him that he could not work on it without danger to life. At this depth the pressure of water on the hands is so great as to force the blood to the head and bring on fainting fits, while the requisite volume of air inside the dress to resist the outside pressure of the water is so great that it would speedily suffocate the diver. Means have been tried to obviate these difficulties, but for the present a limit has been set to the extent to which man may penetrate the secrets of

the deep. An ingenious Italian workman has brought to this country plans for a sort of scale-armour dress which would resist the pressure of the water; but our submarine engineers think that this would not obviate the difficulties arising from the limits placed to human endurance.

Sundry inventions have been put forward for supplying the divers with an artificial light; but under ordinary circumstances they can make out what they are doing. We have heard a man say that at a depth of eighty feet he could discern the bottom of the ship moored above him, and as a general rule the men prefer to trust, like blind men, to their sense of touch. With regard to the temperature of the bottom of the sea, we are led to infer that it is equable. In the hot days of summer, the men realize the fables about the cool grottos of the water-nymphs; while in the winter the diver is much warmer than his friends on the surface. We are not aware that any experiments have been made to determine this.

Whitstable is famous for two things—oysters and divers, who by a curious fate have been brought into that conjunction from which they started—the earliest divers, as we have seen, being divers for oysters. When the telegraph wires are flashing up to Lloyd's the news of wrecks on all parts of our coasts, the agents of that ubiquitous association are busy in all the public-houses of the South Eastern Railway's coaling-station, hunting up divers to be despatched on expeditions of salvage. Shortly there may be seen hasty packing of uncanny-looking equipments, and hardy-looking, broad-shouldered men making their way to the toy-box railway-station, from whence they will take flight to all the great points of disaster. These divers are not usually trained to the work, but are drawn principally from the ranks of sailors, masons, shipbuilders, and carpenters. For instance, if it were required to repair the bottom of a ship, a shipbuilding diver would be selected; or if to erect a pier a mason diver would be told off to the work. In special instances an artisan will necessarily have to be instructed in the diving art, as for instance when it is required to take to pieces and send up the engines of a ship that has been sunk. A good diver will earn about 1*l.* a day, and will be in tolerable regular employment. This applies only to the deep-water divers; if they are working in shallow water the wages are but from 10*s.* to 15*s.* a day. The use of the apparatus is usually charged for separately, at the rate of 2*l.* or 3*l.* per week. The more adventurous and successful of the divers are by no means content with mere weekly wages, but make *special* stipulations for extra risks, in which case the remuneration generally takes the form of a percentage upon the value of whatever is recovered. In some cases, as may be supposed, they obtain large sums of money. Notwithstanding the facts that the divers do not usually constitute shining lights in teetotal societies (when at work, however, they are *ex necessitate* abstemious), and also that they are exposed to great personal risks, they are usually long-lived and commonly present the appearance, quite an exceptional appearance we may say, of hale and hearty men. John Hall, one of the most celebrated of the confraternity, lived to eighty; and Whitstable can at this

moment produce man who may be said to have shaken fins with the sharks any time these fifty years.

Of the various works in which such men are employed it would be impossible to furnish anything like a complete list. The recovery of wrecks forms, or did form, their principal occupation, while by the application of a principle of filling the holds of ships with india-rubber air-bags, afterwards inflated upon calculations founded on those made by Sinclair the mathematician of Edinburgh in 1688, and contained in his *Proposal for Buoying up a Ship of any Burden from the Bottom of the Sea*, they are able actually to raise vessels bodily from the deep. The operations upon the *Royal George*, whose wreck had for more than half a century impeded the navigation of Portsmouth Harbour, and from which the guns, &c. were recovered, the vessel being blown up, and the pieces removed by the divers employed for some years, are among the chief victories of the diving art in its modern development. The immense amount of money recovered from the *Royal Charter* by their means has also evidenced their usefulness. Even after all hope of further salvage had been abandoned, a diver, upon his own venture, recovered in a short time some 800*l.* or 400*l.* from the *Royal Charter* wreck. Of the success of divers in repairing the bottoms of ships we had an instance at the siege of Sebastopol, when the *Agamemnon* was struck below the water-line, and would have had to be docked at Malta but that a diver went down and repaired the injury in such a manner that the ship again went into action. The blasting and removing of rocks and other impedimenta form also an important part of diving work. The rocks are blasted by means of charges of gunpowder placed upon them in canisters, which are connected with a voltaic battery worked from the barge or base of operations. The proceedings of Mr. Hicks at Menai Straits, before referred to, are examples of what may be done in this manner; while the deep entrances to the Birkenhead North Docks and the works in Portpatrick Harbour form a striking testimony to the great importance and success of such operations. In the construction of bridges,—notably those of Westminster and the works proceeding at Blackfriars,—the assistance of divers has been found absolutely necessary; and equally so in the cognate works upon piers, docks, dock-gates, harbours, &c.

The Admiralty have organized a corps of divers under the superintendence of their submarine engineer, Mr. Siebe. Any young A.B. seamen who wish to learn to dive are drafted off for instruction to the *Excellent*, in Portsmouth Harbour, where they are instructed by Mr. William Hardy, the chief diver of Portsmouth Dockyard, who has been for twenty years in the service, and has worked at a depth of 160 feet. When the men are considered competent they are commissioned to some vessel—each vessel on service carrying a diver, who is classed as a petty officer. Their business is to repair any damage to the ship's bottom, to examine the screw-propeller and the cable if necessary, and so on. Some of the vessels on foreign stations have rendered essential service by leading their men and apparatus for the recovery of the mails when an accident has happened to a

mail-steamer. If we are not mistaken, it is now the practice of the Board of Trade to see that a diver is appointed to all the sea-ports in the kingdom.

The old divers are fond of recounting the glories of their craft, and as we have before noticed, are specially impressed with any information as to the fate of the vessels of the Armada. This spirit has been fostered no less by the successes of the ancestor of the Mulgravess than by the good fortune of John Gann of Whitstable. This old diver was many years since employed on the Galway coast, and used to pass his evenings in a public-house frequented by fishermen. One of these men repeating a tradition which had long existed in the district, told Gann that one of the Spanish vessels had been wrecked not far from that coast, and intimated that he himself could point out the spot. Gann having finished his special job, made terms with the fisherman, and they were both out for many weeks dragging the spot indicated, for any traces of wreck. They were at last rewarded by coming upon obstructions with their grapnels. Gann brought out his diving-apparatus, and sure enough the truth of the tradition was vindicated by the finding of a number of dollars, which had originally been packed in barrels; the barrels, however, had rotted away and left the gold stacked in barrel-shape. With the money so recovered, John Gann built at Whitstable, his native place, a row of houses which, to commemorate the circumstance, he called Dollar Row.

An amusing anecdote is told in which the sacred hunger of pernicious gold just escaped being satisfied. A couple of divers had been engaged to bring up the treasure from a Spanish ship, and after recovering what they thought sufficient for the principal in the transaction, they determined to do a little business on their own account. They told him therefore that all the money had been recovered; but he persuaded them to make another search, to which they were obliged to consent to save appearances. To amuse themselves, while they were, in the original sense of the word, amusing their employer, they—so runs the story—began to play pitch-and-toss at the bottom of the sea with the coin still remaining in the wreck. One of the coins in the process of tossing disappeared, and after a time the men came up and solemnly declared that nothing remained below. The employer, however, happening to go behind one of them discovered a coin sticking in his belt or some part of his dress. This was the missing coin. Such evidence was conclusive against the divers. The principal therefore dismissed them, obtained other divers and recovered a great deal more money. Such a story, it is true, sounds apocryphal, but it is told and believed by divers.

Relics of the *Royal George* are of course common enough in Portsmouth, but the unique collection of curiosities made by Mr. Siebe, who conducted the diving operations, are destined for South Kensington, if they are not already there. A vexatious but somewhat laughable incident transpired during the work on the foundations of New Westminster Bridge. It is said that curiosity was aroused by the small quantity of work done by those who were sent down in the bell, and

it was at last discovered that in place of working the men used to amuse themselves by playing cards, and considered themselves much aggrieved that they were not able to smoke. After this the contractors had the men equipped in diving-dresses, which put an end to card-playing at all events. The divers too are fond of relating the cases in which large sums have been recovered from ships by divers who have entered upon speculations. The chances of salvage from the *Royal Charter* were sold for 1,000*l.*, while in one of the working days alone, a sum of 8,000*l.* was recovered. The ultimate profit of that transaction we have not been able to learn. The sums recovered by Mr. Siebo from the *Columbia*, wrecked off Point de Galle in 1850, and by Mr. Heinke from the Peninsular and Oriental steamer *Malabar*, in 1860 (no less than 280,000*l.* were recovered in this case), and the recovery by John Gann of 100,000*l.* from the *Lady Charlotte*, show how natural is the spirit which leads the diver to dilate upon them.

The diver has sometimes sad duties to perform, as happened in the case of the steamship *Dalhousie*, which was sunk near Dundee some years since. The divers had in that case to go into the cabins and remove the bodies of the drowned. Some were in the attitude of prayer, others appeared as they were last engaged in their impotent struggle with death; while the most affecting sights of all were those in which children were found clinging appealingly to their parents. Such occurrences as a matter of course are frequent, and constitute the least pleasant part of a diver's business. There are many other stories current, some of a pathetic but most of a comical nature: such, for instance, as relations of fights with sharks and dog-fish, in which the men had to seek refuge from their enemy in the holds of wrecked ships; and the tale told to M. Esquiro by the Plymouth divers, about one of their body who had love-passages with a mermaid, which of course ended in the usual manner; poetical justice made and provided for such cases being fulfilled by the drowning of the rash lover.

The number of accidents from diving is surprisingly small, so perfectly safe have the apparatus and arrangements now been made. One of the most tragical accidents recorded was caused in a singular manner, but was in no degree owing to any defect in the diving-apparatus itself. A diver at work upon a wreck at Valparaiso had fixed the slings round a box containing ingots of gold. In the course of hauling up the slings broke and the box of gold descended upon the poor diver, killing him there and then.

A Group of Vagabonds.

WHATEVER pilgrimages might have been at an earlier period, they were anything but disagreeable during the Middle Ages. Bit by bit our ancestors eliminated harsh devotion, and substituted amusement, until they became the orthodox means of spending a holiday. Between the tenth and the fifteenth centuries they teemed with pleasant variety, crowding the highways with temporary devotees ("innumerabilis multitudo cœpit confluere : ordo inferiores plebis, mediocres, reges et comites, præsules, mulieres multæ nobiles cum pauperioribus," as Glaber hath it), and tempting a great many people to pass their lives in wandering from shrine to shrine. And, considering the scenes through which they wound, the adventures that befell, and the benefits that they promised—these excursions had obviously sufficient attraction to rouse the vagabond in the steadiest temperament. Nor were the varied characters and strange experiences of the people they threw together calculated to allay the disposition. Here was one who had knelt at Compostella, there another who had bathed in the Jordan, and yonder a third who had climbed the precipices of Sinai. This one had strained at the oar in the galleys of Barbary, that one—like Sir John Mandeville—had served some outlandish potentate, and their neighbour, blue-eyed and large of limb, had wielded the Varangian axe at the palace-gate of Byzantium. All these had much to tell that was well worth listening to, and long practice had enabled them to deliver it with the best effect. They drew the long-bow, indeed, without scruple, and enlarged concerning magician and marvel until wonder's self was sated. But this was no more than was expected. Indeed, they could not otherwise have won a hearing, for our fathers were too fond of gorgeous accessories in all things to tolerate even truth in unembellished form.

Anything and everything, from a scolding wife to homicide, was a sufficient excuse for pilgrimage. It was the best possible preparation for a dangerous enterprise, and the most approved form of thanksgiving for success or escape from peril. The Lord of Joinville stalked in his shirt to every shrine within twenty leagues of his castle previous to joining St. Louis in one of his disastrous crusades. A pilgrimage was the first act of Columbus on recrossing the Atlantic. Louis VII. got rid of a bad wife by means of one such promenade, engaged in another out of gratitude for getting a good one, and undertook a series, distributed over twenty-eight years, to induce the saints to provide him, as they did at length, with a son and heir. Gibbon hints that Peter the Hermit became a pilgrim in order to escape from matrimony. A certain Guy of Crema

went all the way to Ararat to procure a piece of the ark for his wife to wear as a talisman against too great an increase of family. The cross of the good thief, Dismas, preserved by the Cypriotes, was in great request among pious cut-purses. Count Gillibrand, of Sponheim, travelled to Iona to entreat St. Columba for a favourable issue to his feud with his neighbour the Archbishop of Treves; and a dame of Paris tramped to Rheims to procure a spiritual lettre-de-cachet against her husband, who happened to be a staunch Burgundian, herself being strongly attached to the opposite party, in the person of one of its officers.

A troop of pilgrims was never wanting in comic materials. It was always sure to abound in flirtation, fun, and frolic, and especially in eccentricity; and was, indeed, about as queer a hotch-potch of persons as could possibly be contrived. The characters of many were just as odd as their motives, and the following, well known in their time, may be taken as average specimens. Here plodded the merchant Sawolf, who endeavoured by frequent pilgrimage to atone for his much-regretted but unconquerable propensity to cheating. By his side went the monk Romanus of Evrout, afflicted, poor man, to the annoyance of his brother monks, with inveterate kleptomania as regarded their breeches, and who was, therefore, condemned to this species of exile from his convent. And wherever the spirit of mischief found amplest scope, there marched Arlotto il Piovine, the most celebrated droll and incorrigible vagabond of his age, the perpetrator of more loose jests and ridiculous pranks than even Rabelais, and, according to his countrymen, the father of all the "Joe-Millerisms" that have been handed down to them from the Middle Ages. The following is anything but a fair sample of his "facetiae." It is, however, *relateable*, which is much, and in some degree characteristic, which is more: "Ask the countrywoman yonder," said he one day to a comrade when bewildered in the outakirts of Florence. The latter did so, and the dame put down her basket of eggs to reply. Just then a blind beggar came stamping up the narrow path at the tail of his dog. Quick as a Napoleon Messire Arlotto fixed the opportunity, pulled a piece of pudding out of his wallet, and dangled it enticingly on the farther side of the basket. The eur of course sprang at the dainty, regardless of consequences, and down went his master among the eggs.

And these bands contained a sufficient admixture of the tragic to satisfy the keenest lovers of sensation. In their skirts generally skulked one or two like a pair of noble Brston brothers, who, for manifold misdeeds, had been condemned to wander in their shirts, barefoot, besprinkled with ashes, and heavily ironed, "until it should please God to release them from the burden of their chains." During four years of hardship and peril they bore these fetters about with them, from Mount Ararat to Loch Derg, until, in the course of time and many a weary march, the iron had eaten deeply into their flesh. At last, when every foreign saint had proved obdurate, a countryman took pity on their

plight, and their chains dropped off one fine morning at the tomb of St. Marcellinus. These impedimenta did not always betoken a thrilling story and a sincere conversion. Even so early as the days of Charlemagne we find them denounced as, in too many cases, the insignia of imposture.

No doubt the palmers prayed heartily enough at the shrine when they reached it. But it does not appear that they harassed the saints overmuch as they trudged along. On the contrary, we have good reason for suspecting that songs, legends,—some broadly humorous, some quaint and marvellous,—stirring tales of individual adventure, and the notes of the bagpipe and flute, were the means most frequently adopted for beguiling the way ; that most of them were very much of the earth earthy so long as they kept in motion ; and that if by chance they raised their eyes to heaven, it was generally, like the group described by Cervantes, to take aim at it with the end of a bottle.

The scrip and staff were just as often assumed for the purpose of committing new sins as of getting rid of old ones. A shrine was considered an excellent place of assignation, and a pilgrimage a choice means of reaching it undetected. The monkish writers greatly bewail the prevalence of the practice, and take good care to record and enlarge upon the judgments that, now and then, overtook the transgressors. Many a congregation has been edified with the story of Ansered of Sep, which told how a certain dame agreed to meet that profligate youth in the course of such an excursion—how she failed to keep tryst—how the disappointed swain returned to find the cause, and how he had his brains dashed out for his pains by another of her wicked paramours with whom he happened to surprise her ; and too often have the good fathers in their efforts to be graphic wrapped the moral so closely up in the naughtiness that it became very difficult to distinguish it. Among other mischances this bad habit was exceedingly prolific of soiled reputations. A bishop of the period writes as follows concerning our pilgrim countrywomen :—"Parpaucus enim sunt civitates in Longobardia vel in Francia aut in Gallia, in qua non sit adultera vel moertrix generis Anglorum, quod scandalum est turpitudo totius ecclesiae." And the example of Eleanor, the divorced of Louis VII. and the wife of Henry II., showed that the errant dames of other lands were not a whit more immaculate. Not unfrequently an inconvenient spouse was inveigled into pilgrimage that the partner left at home might have full scope for indulgence or elopement. This particular phase of the subject has given birth to innumerable lays and legends in every Christian tongue ; and it has furnished the annalists with an excuse, sufficiently plausible, to divert general attention from the very decisive, but not very creditable, part played by the Church in the conquest of Ireland. The rape of Devorghal, however, had really nothing to do with that event ; for Macmurchad, the perpetrator of the outrage, made his peace with the injured husband full sixteen years before a Norman fort was planted on Irish soil. Occasionally a husband or wife turned pilgrim in order to fasten an ugly charge upon some unfortunate

wight, and thus give a colouring of justice to the active malice of a long-meditated revenge. Such was the origin of the quarrel fought out in 1886 in presence of Charles VI., between the Knight de Carouge and the Squire le Gris. The wife of the former complained that Le Gris had abused her during the pilgrimage of her husband. The accused denied the charge, and the evidence adduced in his favour went far towards proving it an utter fabrication. The lady swore positively that the crime had been perpetrated on a certain day and at a certain hour, and she was sufficiently circumstantial and ingeniously minute in detail to give a very plausible aspect of truth to her story. But though Le Gris failed to account for himself at that particular instant, it was shown that he was many leagues away in attendance on his lord so shortly before and after that the swiftest horse could scarcely have traversed the distance within the time. Nevertheless, as the lady persisted in the accusation, and had powerful friends at her back, it was agreed, that the matter should be decided in the lists. There was a goodly attendance at the scene, and conspicuous among the crowd appeared the prosecutrix robed in black. "The cause is good," was her reply to the last appeal of her husband, and the fight began. Le Gris soon fell beneath the practised strokes of the knight; but even then, with his antagonist's foot on his breast and his sword at his throat, he continued to asseverate his innocence. De Carouge ran him through and trailed his corpse by the heels to the gibbet, according to the statute in that case made and provided, much to the satisfaction of the spectators, who hailed the event as the judgment of heaven. But time, a little later on, told a very different tale. The lady being afflicted with an incurable and most painful malady, and conceiving that her perjury had called down the vengeance of heaven, made a clean breast of it, confessing her crime and acknowledging the innocence of the unfortunate squire.

But a more singular misuse of pilgrimage remains to be told. There are several instances extant of persons who undertook these excursions for the express and *only* purpose of stealing relics. A certain knightly devotee, who went forth to assist in transferring the remains of a celebrated saint to a new and gorgeous shrine, managed to convey a rib into his sleeve during the ceremony, and to carry it off undetected. And Stephen, chanter to the monastery of Angers, trudged barefoot through the whole length of France and Italy all the way to Apulia, in order to purloin an arm of St. Nicholas, the miraculous power of which had brought much glory and gain to the Abbey of Bari, and all but succeeded in the attempt. But unfortunately for him his money ran short in the very nick of time, and in trying to dispose of the silver that enclosed the relic the poor man was detected and the booty reclaimed. There was, however, some little excuse for these holy thieves. By this time it had become almost impossible to procure a genuine relic in any other way; for the graves of martyr and saint had been so thoroughly ransacked, that not even a toenail with any pretence

to occult power remained unappropriated, and the few who endeavoured to procure these things in the regular way of traffic invariably found themselves swindled. Like the Knight Albert of Stein, for instance, who employed a large portion of his wealth—the plunder of many campaigns—in purchasing the skull of St. Anne. This he deposited with much pomp in the principal church of Rome, and received the next morning a small note from his chapmen, the monks of Lyons, apprising him that he was "done," for the true skull of St. Anne, as they wrote, had never once left their possession and never should.

As a matter of course every company of pilgrims had its sprinkling of loose characters, whose blandishments were only too successful. This, however, was very natural. The conscience, whose catalogue of sins was so soon to become a *tabula rasa*, could not be expected to scruple much about adding a few more to the list. Nor was the fact that his old score had ceased to stare a man in the face, at all likely to deter him from commencing to run up a new one. But these reprobates were not altogether without their uses. The occasional conversion of one of the most abandoned, at the close of a licentious campaign, tended greatly to maintain the miraculous repute of the saint who had interposed to effect it. And though these converts were something given to backsliding, one or two of them, like St. Mary of Egypt, made such progress in grace as eventually rendered them good subjects for canonization, enshrinement, and pilgrimage also.

It was not difficult to graduate a pilgrimage according to inclination or iniquity. It might be made as short as a hunting mass, or as long as the Midgard serpent that was said to encircle the world. Cologne and Compostella, Sinai and Ararat, the more famous places of resort, formed the extremities of an enormous quadrangle, enclosing the Mediterranean; while fanes of lesser but still sufficient note were plentifully strewn between. In most countries hospitals were maintained at every stage for the accommodation of the pilgrim; and chivalry in arms kept watch and ward wherever he was in danger of pagan insult or aggression. For him the Teutonic brotherhood guarded the German forests; for him the knights of Santiago patrolled the Moorish frontier; and for him the galleys of St. John maintained ceaseless and most gallant warfare with the merciless rovers of the Mediterranean. Kings and councils took care of his interests while engaged in these holy excursions, and hedged his household and estate from all assault. Debtors were forbidden to dun and enemies to assail, and the severest form of excommunication was denounced against his wife did she dare to contract another marriage during his absence. Of course there were exceptional places and periods wherein pilgrimage became unusually perilous,—as, for instance, when about the middle of the fifteenth century a certain Italian nobleman established himself in a strong castle on the road to Loretto, and amused himself for some time with robbing the male pilgrims and outraging the women. But these hitches in that pleasant life were few and far between.

Generally speaking the pilgrim was a complete illustration of the eastern proverb, for, no matter where he was thrown into the ever-flowing Nile of pilgrimage, he was pretty sure to emerge with a fish in his mouth and a loaf in his hand.

The sites of some prominent shrines were designated by great events ; but by far the greater number owed their repute to the possession of relics. A goodly number of these relics, too, like Sir Boyle Roche's bird, had the faculty of gracing two places at once. The holy stairs—there which originally led to Pilate's judgment seat—might be contemplated at Rome as well as at Bonn. The holy cross existed in a complete state at Constantinople, and in fragments all over the world. One monastery displayed the head of a saint, another his head, and a third his head. And there were several examples of holy men who were first distributed piecemeal among forty or fifty different abbeys, and then were yet to be seen, unmutilated, under the guardianship of some unusually favoured community. But it was not indispensable that relics should always be saintly ; it was sufficient if they happened to be very extraordinary. Thus, in one quarter might be seen the plume of a phoenix, presented by one of the Popes ; in another the mark that Cain bore about on his forehead ; and in a third the tip of Lucifer's tail, lost in conflict with a Syrian hermit.

When relics were not attainable, or were likely to be overshadowed by noted matter of the sort in the neighbourhood, recourse was had to picture, statue, and trick, with very substantial results. Thus, one place accumulated liberal crowds by a weeping Madonna ; another by a crucifix exuding blood or oil ; a third by a figure which groaned ; while the good fathers of Breslau, more original still, attracted and perplexed their visitors by a clever carving, which purported to represent “the Devil wheeling his grandmother in a barrow.”

Nor were shrines sought, saints invoked, and relics kissed on merely spiritual grounds. For all possible temporal afflictions—from a pestilence to a plague of rats—there existed special remedies ; and every calamity sent forth crowds to “profit by them. St. Lambert was the chosen physician of the epileptic ; St. Odille of the blind ; St. Blaise was infallible in the cure of sore-throats ; a journey to the shrine of St. Appollonia never failed to remove the toothache ; and the barrenest stock grew prolific of olive-branches when washed by the waves of the Jordan. But unquestionably the oddest prayer ever made at a shrine was that of the good Knight Ralph, who “entreated that his body might be overspread with the foul disease of leprosy, so that his soul might be cleansed from sin,” and who, obtaining his desire, died six years afterwards in the odour of sanctity.

The mediæval pilgrim believed as implicitly as *Aelian* or *Pliny* that the vipers of Sicily could distinguish between legal and illegitimate children ; he looked upon Etna and Vesuvius as the outlets of Pandemonium ; and he attributed more virtues to the diamond than ever the ancients

dreamed of. According to him that gem preserved the health of its wearer, developed and cherished wit in him, secured his triumph in a good cause, baffled enchantments, dispersed phantoms, paralysed wild beasts, tamed lunatics, and grew moist in the presence of poison ; that is, it displayed all these admirable qualities if it had been obtained uncoveted and unpurchased, as a free gift. But it was in favour of his shrine that the pilgrim chiefly delighted to expand his credulity. Marvellous were the things related of those places. In this respect St. Patrick's Purgatory bore away the palm from even the Virgin's house at Loretto and the convent of Sinai—though the former was transported through the air from Palestine ; and though the future head of the latter house was always pointed out by the spontaneous ignition of his lamp, and the deaths of his brethren portended by the mysterious extinction of theirs. It appears that the greatest obstacle to the conversion of the Irish was their disbelief in future punishment ; they would not credit the existence of Tartarus unless they saw it. This was a source of much trouble to the great missionary. At length he received a revelation which turned his perplexity to joy. He was shown a cave in a desert place, and informed that whoever would spend a night within its precincts should behold the torments of the wicked and the enjoyments of the blessed, and return cleansed of all sin. Immediately St. Patrick enclosed the cave, built an oratory in its neighbourhood, and committed it to the custody of a company of monks. Thenceforth, down even to this very hour, the place became a noted resort of pilgrims. Few, however, were found daring enough to penetrate the dismal vault. Still, thefeat was attempted on rare occasions, and yet more rarely achieved, for it was fraught with unexampled terror and exceeding peril. Conspicuous among the few who ventured to explore its recesses and returned to tell the tale, was the knight Owen. This man had rendered his youth infamous by loose and violent living ; but, awaking in time to a fit sense of his wickedness, he sought a bishop, confessed, so far as in him lay made reparation, and entreated to be burdened with a penance of suitable severity. Accordingly the prelate, but with some reluctance, desired him to go to the infernal regions, as displayed in St. Patrick's Purgatory, and gave him a letter to facilitate his entrance. Received by the prior, he remained fifteen days in fasting, prayer, and flagellation, by way of preface to his undertaking. At the end of that time a solemn service, including the prayers for the dead, was recited. The monks then led the knight to the entrance of the cave, besprinkled him plentifully with holy water, loaded him with good wishes, and locked the wicket behind him. The knight crossed himself, and stepped boldly forward, like Christian through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The day faded behind him as he went, until at length the passage opened upon a plain that stretched boundlessly through the dim twilight. Before him stood a small chapel—a roof supported by pillars ; he entered, and seated himself. In a few minutes, fifteen men, robed in white, with newly-shaven crowns, marched in and saluted him

in the name of the Lord. The leader then addressed him, and commended his resolution, but warned him that he would encounter much risk to soul and body. "The moment we leave you," said he, "a multitude of unclean spirits will set upon you. They will threaten you, torment you, and leave no means untried to turn you back. But as you value your salvation here and hereafter, heed them not. Give way to them but for an instant, and you are irretrievably lost. Be firm, then, and cease not to invoke the name of the Lord. Thus are they to be overcome, and thus only." The fifteen then left him. The knight collected all his courage, and he had full need of it. A multitude of hideous demons thronged in. They threatened, they tempted, and finding him unshaken by these means, kindled a huge fire, flung him in, and dragged him up and down through the blaze with iron hooks. But he called vigorously on the name of the Lord, and the flames had no power to hurt him. Next they dragged him through a black wilderness to a region of woe and calamity. It was thronged with innumerable people, fastened face downwards to the ground with red-hot nails, and tortured by howling fiends. Again he was required to return. He refused, and the demons attempted to inflict upon him the sufferings that he witnessed. Thus he passed through various appalling scenes to that place concerning which Dante writes—"All hope abandon ye who enter here." Thence he was led to a broad and noisome river—spanned by a lofty, narrow, and slippery bridge—"Al Sirat's arch"—which, in spite of opposing demons, he traversed safely until he reached the mansions of the blessed. And here we cannot help remarking that, graphic and precise as they are concerning the place of torment, the monks are altogether vague when they write of heaven. There is one passage, however, in this particular description, that deserves to be preserved:—"A ray of light, descending from God, lit up the whole country; and a sparkle of it settling upon his head and entering his body, the knight felt such a delicious sweetness pervade his heart and frame that he hardly knew whether he was alive or dead." Returning, he met the fifteen in the chapel, and was urged by them to depart quickly. "The day is breaking," said they; "and if the brethren find you not at the gate, they will conclude that you have been destroyed like so many others, and abandon you to your fate." To avert this catastrophe the knight made haste and reached the wicket just in time. The monks received him joyfully, and conducted him with thanksgiving to the altar. There he remained for another period of fifteen days, engaged in fervent prayer; and he left the priory only for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

There were so many of these shrines, and superstition attached so much sanctity to the pilgrim who had visited the more famous of them, that a perpetual inducement was held out to vagrancy and pilgrimage to rise into a profession. An amusing rover was the professional pilgrim—and as shrewd as he was popular. Brimful of song and story, habituated to travel, and a sharer in many a wild adventure, there was no pleasanter

companion than the palmer during the long winter evenings. His lore was adapted to suit all ages and every variety of taste. He could discourse as eloquently of love and beauty as of martyr and miracle ; he could troll a lively ditty as well as a solemn psalm ; and he could crack a joke as readily as he could quote a homily. He possessed quaint secrets, too, valuable to housewife and farmer, was an excellent judge of cattle, and a veritable clerk of the weather. And his knowledge of the latest fashions of tiro and doublet, and the newest tricks at fence—to say nothing of current scandals—recommended him equally to the maidens and youths of the hamlet. He was skilful, also, at compounding love-potions and infallible salves for broken heads, and was an adept in portent and palmistry. He was as welcome to the castle as to the cottage ; and found as comfortable a corner by the abbey fire as in the chimney nook at the alehouse. And he was always secure of a refuge ; for, when his resources were exhausted in one quarter—all his stories told and all his attractions ended—a stroll of ten or a dozen miles would place him within a new circle, as willing to be amused and instructed as the last. Unless, indeed, some irrepressible inclination rendered further flight indispensable. For these wanderers, with their practised tongues and ready wit, made way only too easily with the gentler sex, and very frequently the rosy daughter elected to cast in her lot with the fascinating pilgrim. Nor was that individual altogether useless. He was the newspaper and the circulating library of the day, besides being—unconsciously, indeed, and slowly, but nevertheless surely—the disseminator of civilization. He made distant lands acquainted, and interchanged far and wide the ideas of peoples otherwise sundered. For he was obliged of necessity to traverse the whole extent of Christendom, since the principal shrines—those which no pilgrim could dispense with visiting—lay at its four extremities. To this we owe, among other things, that strange jumble of myth and fable which constitutes the popular legends and superstitions of the Middle Ages—those stories wherein the doings of Djinn, Gnome, and *Aesir* are so oddly interwoven that it is now well-nigh impossible to distinguish in any of them a distinct nationality. To this, too, we owe the universal prevalence of that legend which represents the favourite hero of every land, from Denmark to Dalmatia, restrained in magic slumber until the extremity of his country shall rouse him to a long career of triumph ; for what is it but a form of that belief so long current in the East concerning the incarnation of Deity ?

Now and then a *bond fide* pilgrim—one who really endeavoured to subdue the pangs of remorse, and to atone for enormous crimes by these wanderings—would appear along the routes, appalling all with whom he came in contact with his wretched aspect and still more miserable story. Such a one was that Count of Anjou, the latter portion of whose life was one unending pilgrimage. The perpetrator of previously unheard-of atrocities—the murderer by every fearful means of all his nearest relatives, his brother heading the list—wherever he went he seemed to

see his victims : they haunted his path, they interrupted his prayers, they circled his sleepless pillow, appearing to his desperate sight in all the terrors of their last agonies, wearying his ear with their reproaches, and ceaselessly invoking vengeance on his head.

One of the most astonishing features of the Middle Ages was their wandering associations of penitents. Famines and pestilences were awfully frequent in those days, and destructive far beyond modern experience. Every eight or ten years they came—first dearth, and then the pest—with the utmost regularity. And as the people were taught that these calamities were the manifestations of heavenly wrath provoked by sinful indulgence, while they were accustomed by long habit to resort to penance as a universal remedy, it was but natural that they should endeavour to arrest their ravages by a course of severe asceticism. During the continuance of these plagues, therefore, penance became a mania, and fraternities were established for its better practice. Thus every few years a vast mass of people would suddenly appear in motion from shrine to shrine, praying and mortifying as they went, and gathering recruits at every step. And after exciting universal interest, the band would dissolve as suddenly as it had assembled. These companies were very numerous, counted, indeed, by hundreds ; but every one of them had its features strongly stamped with individuality. Some admitted only the poor, others were limited to males, and one or two were formed exclusively of children. Now and again, too, brotherhoods arose which opened their ranks to those only who professed peculiar opinions. The great majority, indeed, were free to all Christians without distinction of age, sex, rank, or opinion ; but every one of them had some peculiarity of discipline that rendered it strikingly unique. While the greater number of these singular congregations excited a merely temporary interest, a few survived for years, and one or two of the more popular were reproduced again and again, down almost to our own time.

One day—we write of the dawn of the fifteenth century—a countless multitude was seen descending the slopes of the Alps into Italy. Whence it came or how it had originated were mysteries. It might have sprung complete from the glaciers for all that could be told ; and its spectral appearance by no means tended to diminish the universal amazement. A white shroud was wrapped, from forehead to heel, round every member of the host, and concealed them alike from their comrades and the outward world. Some paces in front of this living avalanche stalked the leader, in similar attire, rearing, by way of banner, a lofty crucifix on his shoulder. Who or what he was none knew—name, country, and profession—in all things he remains to this hour as much an enigma as the “man in the iron mask.” Concerning one thing, however, there could be no mistake : for the time being he was a mighty power. His figure was commanding, his voice sonorous, and his eloquence persuasive exceedingly. Now the multitude paused to hear his impassioned declamation ; and anon the

march was resumed to the melody of hymns, which, pealing from ten thousand tongues, rolled through the woods and fields like thunder softened down to music, and exercised an irresistible power over the sympathies of the hearers. Grand as they are at all times, never were the "Dies Irae" and the "Stabat Mater" so expressive. As it was merely requisite to accompany this attractive band for a very limited period, in order to share the benefits that attached to its sanctity, it soon became very popular. Knights, nobles, and courtly dames thronged to swell its ranks, and a cardinal led the march from Florence to Rome. At length the leader excited the jealousy of the reigning Pope, was seized, and committed to the flames. Excommunication and civil enactments were levelled at his followers in all directions—the first Parliament of Henry IV. passing an Act against them—and the White Brethren dispersed for ever.

The autumn of 1816 saw something quite as strange. Louis Hulin declared war with Flanders, raised an army, and advanced towards the frontiers. His march, however, was stayed by a succession of heavy rains, which spoilt his stores and spread sickness through his ranks. Being thus compelled to return to the capital, the disease was communicated by the troops to the citizens of Paris, and soon became terribly virulent. To propitiate the saints a series of processions was organized, and for several weeks the streets were paraded daily by an enormous throng. In front marched the ecclesiastics of the capital, plentifully provided with banners, crosses, reliques, and all the other paraphernalia of superstition. Then followed the court and its great officers. And behind them trooped a long array of both sexes and every rank, "*in puris naturalibus*;" while such of the populace as could not muster sufficient faith or impudence, as the case might be, to join the naked band, formed a zone around it, and added their portion to the universal prayer. Nor were these scenes confined to Paris—they accompanied the disease from one end of the kingdom to the other. These freaks, like many others of the same period, and several of much later date, were always justified by bishops, anabaptists, and puritans, with Scriptural arguments.

In 1251 all France was dismayed by fearful news from Egypt. Its crusading army had been destroyed, and King Louis and such of his nobles as survived were captives in the hands of the infidel. At this juncture a Hungarian preacher made his appearance. He traversed the country in all directions, denouncing the abominable pride and luxury of the nobles as the cause of the disaster. "Such hands as theirs," he cried, "can never wrest the Holy Sepulchre from the grasp of the miscreants. That honour the Virgin reserves for the poor and the lowly. And here," he added, raising a hand kept always tightly clenched, "here I bear the summons, written by her own fingers, and carried down to me from heaven by an angel, which calls upon the ploughman and the shepherd to go forth and work the deliverance of the sacred soil." A

hundred thousand of the lowest class soon gathered round his pennon. In the midst of such a mass the Hungarian waxed still bolder. Hitherto he had spared the clergy ; but from that time forth his diatribes against sensuality fell far more frequently among them than among the nobles. And, assailing the system as well as the ministers—smiting full at the root as well as at the branches—he poured forth the most extravagant and levelling doctrines. Nor was his the only voice that indulged in these rude philippics. Scores upon scores of his followers emulated his example, mounted the stump in all quarters, and cried just as fiercely and effectively against their temporal and spiritual superiors. And their practices were just as mischievous as their precepts. They were religious and very ceremonious in their way ; but neither their ethics nor their rites were exactly such as honesty could always approve of. They displayed, indeed, like many other fanatics and one or two reformers, a remarkable faculty for performing the works of Satan in the name of divinity. Some of them contracted very disorderly marriages, more of them dispensed with the ceremony altogether, and the whole body, forsaking their occupations, lived and enjoyed themselves at the expense of those poor misled creatures who still remained in “the gall of bitterness.” The clergy were furious, and well they might be ; but they were altogether powerless, for the strength of the nobles was otherwise employed, and the middle-classes, such of them at least as had suffered nothing from the Pastoureaux, had no objection at all to see the vices of their spiritual pastors and masters receive a little well-deserved castigation. One or two of the priests ventured to attend the meetings of the Pastoureaux, in the hope of being able to neutralize the effects of their inflammatory harangues ; but they had good reason to regret their folly, for the moment they were recognized they were set upon and beaten without mercy. On the festival of St. Barnabas the Pastoureaux entered Orleans, a city that regarded them with peculiar favour, in solemn procession. Having circled the town with all the pomp and circumstance in which such rabblements delight, drums beating, colours flying, they gathered in groups round their favourite orators. A scholar belonging to the university interrupted one of these spouters, and denounced him to his face, and, what the speaker thought very much more about, to the faces of his auditors, as “a liar, a reprobate, a hypocrite, and a heretic.” These epithets, pretty as they were, could not stand comparison for an instant with those the Pastoureaux applied hourly to “the bloated bishops and something-or-other aristocracy.” But such a trifling consideration as that could not be expected to sway an excited mob, and so they set upon the student and tore him to shreds in less than five minutes. They next made a rush at the university, beat all the students that came in their way, burnt the library, and massacred five-and-twenty priests out of hand. For a few hours they carried all before them, and mob law, with all its amenities, reigned supreme. But a reaction soon set in. The Orleans outrage inflicted a death-blow on the gathering of the Pastoureaux.

Respectability withdrew its patronage—in fact, became positively and unequivocally hostile ; and, appalled at their handiwork, the Pastoureaux retreated in haste to the fields, split up into factions, struck their tents, packed up their goods, and other people's too—for this kind of reformer delights much in spoiling the Egyptians—and departed in different directions. At first they maintained something like an orderly march, but their steps quickened by degrees as the troops, which a vacillating government at last mustered courage to let loose, drew nearer and nearer. One body, headed by the Hungarian, made its way to Bourges. There the leader announced that, on a certain day, he would perform, not one, but many miracles ! A great crowd gathered to witness the marvels, and, as the operator failed to keep his promise, they comforted themselves for the disappointment by knocking him on the head. Another leader escaped to England with a small number of followers, and was torn to pieces by the people of Shoreham. Of the remainder, a good many escaped by resuming their former employments. Enough, however, were slaughtered and gibbeted to sicken the travellers for many a month with their unburied carcases. But the animating spirit was not yet extinguished. It smouldered on for seventy years, and then, in 1820, burst forth in even a fiercer flame. On this occasion, two apostate priests, taking up the text of the Hungarian, gathered similar hordes around them. These mobs encamped in the centre of France, helped themselves by force to whatever they wanted, and sent out numerous missionaries to rouse all their brethren to a similar course. Some of these gentry being imprisoned by the authorities of Paris, a large body of the Pastoureaux marched on the capital, gained an entrance, broke open the prisons, and released their deputies. Then directing their course southward, wherever they came, they hunted up and massacred the Jews, slaying them with such hideous tortures that 500 of these people—who with their families and their property had sought refuge in the royal castle of Verdun—finding the fortress too weak to defend them, actually flung their children from the battlements, and then slaughtered each other, in preference to falling alive into the hands of the Pastoureaux. But the course of these fanatics was nearly run. The Pope excommunicated them ; and, becoming involved in the marshes of Lignes-Mortes, they were there hemmed in by the troops until the greater portion of them perished miserably by famine and disease. Of the remainder, a very few were allowed to escape ; but so many were hanged that “the trees were split with the weight of their bodies.”

In the summer of 1218 a boy was noticed wandering from town to town in France. His hand was never stretched out for alms, nor his voice subdued into the beggar's whine. He belonged not to the tribe of vagrant students, and still less to that of the mountebank or the pecaroon. Neither did he carry either of those universal passports—the palmer's staff, or the gleeman's cithara. Unlike each and all of these, his mien was saintly and his conduct irreproachable. Wherever he went he

chanted the words, "Lord Jesus, give us back the Holy Cross!" pausing only to indulge in fervent prayer. In a little time he was universally revered as the messenger of heaven, and happy was that house esteemed wherein he doigned to take up his lodging. But soon alarm began to permeate and deepen the awe with which he was everywhere regarded. And truly the effect of his example was appalling. All at once a strange infatuation seized on all the boys of the same age. No sooner was his voice heard in any town or hamlet, than out they poured, mustered in his track, and accompanied him blindly whithersoever it pleased him to direct his course. Bolts and bars were useless to restrain them; tears and prayers to turn them from their purpose. They hastened to quit father, mother, home, everything that was dearest, to follow this strange leader, and chant with him, "Lord Jesus, give us back the Holy Cross!" They came to him by twenties, by hundreds, by thousands. Every day added to the throng, until at length no city would consent to receive them within its walls. Having gathered this great host, he directed its march towards the shores of the Mediterranean. Himself led the way reclining in a chariot lined with cloaks. After him pressed the countless throng chanting, "Lord Jesus, give us back the Holy Cross." And every instant they trampled the weaker to death, as they struggled for the place nearest to their leader's car, for he among them was envied exceedingly who could touch his person or gather a thread from his robe. In the end the whole of them perished on the land or in the sea.

Even more singular were the dancers, who first attracted attention at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1878. A set of ragged wanderers were these who made beggary an article of faith, and who signalized themselves by extreme dissent from the Church, and contempt for its organization. They admitted only the initiated to their private assemblies, which were held at night in secret places, and where it was said they practised the greatest abominations. Wandering about in bands of thirty or forty, their professional poverty, their impassioned earnestness, their frantic rites, and their contempt for persecution, gave them extraordinary power. Wherever they appeared their singular aspect and still more singular reputation attracted multitudes of spectators; and a crowd was all they required to go through their singular performances. In those superstitious times it was almost impossible to witness their furious motions and hear their frenzied shrieks—motions of worship and shrieks of prayer, veritable attempts to take heaven by storm—without being infected by the mania. Indeed their example was as contagious as the plague, and equally dreaded. If we are to credit the annalists of the period—and with the doings of the revivalists in view it would be scarcely fair to disbelieve *all* that they tell us concerning these dancers—no rank, no profession, no place was exempt from the contagion. Wherever it found human life and nerves, there it exercised dominion. Everywhere the dancers became at will the centre of a writhing multitude. And the disjointed ravings of these paroxysms were generally

regarded as prophetic. Nor did the mania depart with the vagabonds who brought it. Wherever the excitement had once fastened it never relaxed its hold. In vain was the axe plied on these enthusiasts and the gibbet loaded with their bodies. They disappeared only when Europe became satiated with their extravagance.

But unquestionably the strangest of all those itinerants of faith were the gloomy flagellants ; and, oddly enough, they were also the most tenacious of existence. A singularly impressive picture they present—more like a dismal vision of dreamland than a gathering of human life—a sable host in ceaseless march—each phantom's shoulder bare, the left hand bearing a little wooden cross, and the right a whip, so well applied that the dust in the track of the long procession was dimpled with its blood. Groans, shrieks, and wild ejaculations rose multitudinous, and enveloped the march with a deep dread sound, like the dash of the agitated sea. Wherever that sound alarmed the ear—in the passes of the Apennines, through the German forests, across the fields of France—those who happened to be in the vicinity fled or hid themselves. For the penitential torrent absorbed all who happened to cross its course. No matter who they were nor how employed—no matter how pressed nor how expected—there was no escape for any. Resistance was in vain, remonstrance unheeded. Here the dreary fanatics surprised a troop of beggars, there a band of hunters, yonder a company of traders or a bridal group ; and, under penalty of having the flesh flogged from their bones, forced them to become flagellants, until they were released by reaching the next celebrated shrine—Loretto, it might be, or Cologne, or Rheims. History first notices the flagellants in 1260, when the Crusades began to flag. They reappeared again in the fourteenth century, and for ten years perambulated and agitated Europe. This was their palmy day, and it was also the one in which they encountered most opposition from pope and prince, particularly in Germany, where, for the time, they were put down by the Teutonic knights. In 1351, these warriors mustered, and having well prepared themselves for the task, by fasting and prayer, they set upon a body of the flagellants in full march, massacred thousands of them on the spot, and compelled the multitude of their captives to be rebaptized. The flagellants made their last appearance towards the close of the sixteenth century, when Henry III. attempted to render them fashionable. As a flagellant he paraded the streets of Paris in the depth of winter, attended by the dames and gallants of his court, and followed by a long array of rabble, all plying the whip and all suitably apparelléd—not a few, as in the days of Louis Hutin—the king being conspicuous by a wreath of skulls twined round his waist. But enthusiasm being the life of these brotherhoods, they speedily died out when adopted by frivolity.

Camp Life in Abyssinia.

Antalo, March 10.

THE public are kept so thoroughly informed by the despatches of the authorities, and by the letters of the special correspondents, as to the general progress of this expedition, and the main features of the people and country through which we are passing, that any details upon these subjects would appear to be quite superfluous. But there is one phase of the expedition, and that a very important one to those engaged in it, which has been hitherto but little touched upon. I mean the actual routine of camp life, the food we eat, and the way we live. It is my intention, therefore, in this article, while speaking of the expedition generally, to endeavour to keep that ground more strongly than any other in view. Let me first depict the tent I am writing in, one of the ordinary English military tents of bell shape. Our party is three in number, known by the *sobriquets* of the "Drayman," so called from his general build and especial development of leg; "the Jockey," or "Lightweight," of about half the weight of the preceding occupant; and the "Professor," so called from a charming egotism, peculiar to himself, of expressing himself in an *ex cathedra* manner upon every imaginable point. Three in a bell-tent is very close work. Fortunately, two of us sleep upon the ground, the third enjoying the luxury of a portable bedstead. Boxes form our chairs and tables. One revolver, and a looking-glass, a thoroughly useless article in this tent, hang from the central pole, and, as the wind is blowing sharply, the whole fabric keeps up a confused flapping and roaring, which renders conversation almost an impossibility. The tent is in comparative darkness, as candles are very precious, and I have the only one alight stuck in a bottle upon the ground beside me; and all three men are smoking with great steadiness. The party present have messed together since we landed at Zoula, more than two months ago; but it is only lately that we have been three in a tent. But to begin at Zoula. It was early in December when we landed, and the dead and dying mules and camels were horrible to see—and worse than that, dense clouds of sand enveloped everything; and a hundred or so of tents, and some piles of commissariat stores, were the sole precursors of what was to be in a short time a large canvas town. It certainly was a wrench to leave our comfortable and well-appointed transport, and to land upon that shifting sand desert. However, there was no help for it, and, with our band playing, and the men cheering as we left the ship's side, we landed as gaily as if we were entering a favourite garrison town. We had heard so much of Zoula, and what had been done there, that I think we

were almost as surprised at seeing only a few tents, a couple of dozen at the most, scattered about, with no native huts or sign of habitation, as was young Martin Chuzzlewit when he found what the thriving town of Eden was in reality. But for the next hour or two we were too busy seeing our own and the men's tents pitched to think about the country. When this was done, and our duties all over, we strolled out together to inspect our new land of promise. It would be difficult to say whether the sense of smell or sight were most offended. We arrived there at the worst time, and dying and dead mules and camels were met with everywhere. The scenes were frightful—worst of all by the waterside. Here half-maddened mules would rush into the sea and drink, and then stagger back to die in the low scrub. By the edge of the sea were camels dead and dying, camels picked clean by vultures, camels half buried, camels which ought to have been buried days before. Farther out in the sea were objects which looked like huge birds, but which were camels lying down in the shallow water. Here they had been lowered from the native dacs in which they had come from Aden ; and here very many died, either from pure weakness or drowned by the tide when it rose. In among the bushes other camels were lying—living skeletons. They had struggled to shore, and there they had sunk down, feebly cropping the scanty leaves within reach. It was so horrible that we could talk but little. Then—for it was just watering time—we went to the troughs—miserable-looking things—at which five or six animals at most could be watered. There was a guard to preserve order, but order could not have been kept by ten times as many men. There were hundreds of transport animals, with one driver to each four or five of them. But what could one driver do with five half-mad animals ? They struggled, they kicked, they bit, they fought like wild beasts for a drink of the precious water for which they were dying. Besides these led animals were numerous other waifs, which, having broken their head-ropes, had gone out on the plain to seek a living on their own account. For these there was no water. They were beaten off. Most of them, after a repulse or two, submitted to their fate, and went off to die ; others fought for their lives, cleared a way to the trough with heels and teeth, and drank regardless of the blows showered on them. It was the most painful sight I ever witnessed in my life. We went back to our tent to eat our dinner in silence, unmindful of the fact that the meat was hard as leather, and full of grit ; and then, lighting pipes and cigars, our indignation found words.

"By Jove," the Drayman said, "if I knew who was responsible for all this, I should be inclined to horsewhip him to the last inch of his wretched life, even if I were dismissed the service five minutes afterwards."

"My dear fellow," the Jockey said mildly—he has a hateful way of being sarcastic at times—"you are threatening a non-existent personage. We are in the blame. No one will be blamed. Every one has done his duty in an exemplary way. Some little conflict of departments has occurred, and a few animals suffer. Voilà tout."

"Nonsense!" the Drayman said, angrily. "This is not an ordinary case. Some one must be to blame, some one must be made to suffer for the torture his gross neglect has inflicted on these poor brutes."

"My dear fellow," Lightweight replied, "you take such a hasty view of things! The public does not suffer torture, and takes no account of feelings. If you had said the public will demand a strict investigation into the pecuniary loss consequent on the death of so great a number of animals, you might perhaps be nearer the mark. But who is he?"

"The commanding officer, to begin with," the Drayman said.

"Who is the commanding officer?" the Jockey asked. "I mean who was he before — and — came into harbour?"

There was a pause.

"I have taken some little pains to find out," the Professor rejoined, taking his cigar from his lips, and speaking in the oracular and deliberate way usual to him—"I have taken some little pains to find out, and I am told that there was no officer whatever in command."

"Nonsense, man! there must have been some one in command."

"I can assure you that there was no one in command. There was a head of the commissariat, a head of the quartermaster's department, a head of the transport train, each of whom did his best for himself; but there was no one in command, no one to direct operations."

"But," the Drayman cried, impatiently, "there are lots of colonels—there's A, B, C, and D, for instance—one of them must have been in command."

"The four officers you have named," the Professor answered placidly, "started a fortnight since for Senafé, leaving things here to take care of themselves."

"Do you mean to tell me that these men went off at a time when two or three ships a day, full of men and animals, were arriving; that they every one went away, and, as you put it, left things to take care of themselves, and did not even put any one in command to keep them straight?"

The Professor nodded.

"Then, by Jove," the Drayman furiously exclaimed, "the British public will insist on these men explaining their conduct."

"Well," said the Jockey, "I will bet you three to one that there is nothing whatever said about it?"

But the Drayman thought that impossible—proving to his own satisfaction that the present was the very grossest case of mismanagement which ever happened in the animals of the British army.

Perhaps it was so; but for all that, four months have elapsed, and the Jockey has been justified. Every one has been praised and thanked, and some soldiers have been promoted. The dead animals have been buried, and so has the disposition for inquiry.

"What is this nastiness I am drinking?" one of our party asked, when the conversation had at last exhausted itself upon the horrible state of things around us.

After two or three tastings, it was unanimously agreed that we were drinking salt-water, mixed with brandy. Our servant was called. He, in his turn, summoned the water-carrier, who declared that it was obtained from the tanks. There was nothing more to be said, so we threw away the contents of our glasses and ordered tea. Then a black mixture was brought, intensely bitter, and with no taste whatever of tea. We gave up in despair, and resolved to go to bed.

Lightweight had got on his pyjamas, and was about to get into his blankets, when the Professor said quietly,—“I should advise you to examine your bed before you lie down ; there is something running across it now.” The something was a scorpion. After a sharp hunt the creature was killed, and after a careful examination we wrapped ourselves in our rugs, the Jockey making, meanwhile, anxious inquiries of the Professor as to the effects of a bite of a scorpion, and the remedies. “ I fancy by what I have heard,” he said finally, “ that the best plan, if one is bitten, is to cut the place out. Look here, Professor, I have put my open knife, matches, and a candle, on this box. If you hear me holla, you jump out and strike a light, and lose no time in cutting away before it spreads.”

Our duties at Zoula could hardly be termed light. The men were constantly on fatiguing duty—unloading stores from the lighters, carrying railway-sleepers, furnishing guards at the water-tanks, and so forth. The heat was great, but not overpowering ; but the dust was almost appalling. Had it not been for the morning and evening bath in the sea, I do not know what we should have done. Barbers were in great request. Every one had his hair cut as short as scissors could cut it ; and any one landing might have guessed, from our appearance, that he had just arrived at a convict settlement. For the first week we struggled for existence upon food cooked by our soldier servants, eked out with preserved meats, ham, and sticks of chocolate. The united invention of our three servants could only produce three dishes, which they called Irish stew, beef-steak, and roast-beef. The extreme toughness of the stew, the leathery nature of the steak, and the perfect dryness of the beef rendered them alike abominable. They worked our jaws to a standstill ; and had it not been for the aid of the preserved meats, I believe we should have starved. “ My dear fellows,” the Lightweight said, after one of these banquets, “ you may say what you like, but this cannot go on. We must get a native servant, cost us what it may.” For once there was perfect accord among us ; and three days afterwards we were fortunate enough to receive a Goa Portuguese, whose late master had brought more servants than he was able to take on with him. He proved to be a capital fellow, and a first-rate cook ; and our little mess was the admiration of the regiment. Fortunately the Professor combined with his other admirable qualities that of a good shot, and many a guinea-fowl has he brought in as an addition to our larder. There is no better bird eaten than a guinea-fowl when well cooked. It is larger than a pheasant, and more tender.

It has a much more decidedly game flavour, and tastes indeed somewhat between a pheasant and a grouse.

Long before we left Zoula we had the satisfaction of seeing the terrible state of things I have described entirely altered. Sir Charles Staveley took matters in hand, and ere long everything was going on smoothly. Troughs were set up at which fifty animals could drink at once ; and remembering the scenes we had witnessed when we first landed, it was now a pleasure to go down and see the long lines of mules come up and drink their fill. The bad days through which they had passed had, however, done their work. Disease was engendered, which sooner or later told upon the animals ; and although a large number, no doubt, died of disease engendered in the country itself, it is certain that a much larger number died of lung-disease brought on by insufficient water and food. Accordingly, the transport train was crippled ; and instead of the troops for the advanced division being at Sonafé with a good supply of stores by the end of December, they were not ready for an advance until the first week in February. This, however, is not a subject to be entered into in a letter the object of which is to give a picture of camp life.

If the supply of water of those animals increased before we left Zoula, that issued to us decreased greatly. Very stringent regulations were made, according to which three quarts of water became our daily allowance. This was for cooking, drinking, and washing. At most, a quart remained for the latter purpose ; and this in a climate where the thermometer in our tent stood at 105, where one was in a permanent state of perspiration, and where the dust blew in such thick clouds that one could not see twenty yards ! When we stopped in our tent it was well enough ; but we came in from fatigue-work so covered with a crust of dirt as to be absolutely unrecognizable. The Drayman and the Professor, who took their swim twice a day, were able to bear this philosophically. Lightweight, however, a man of delicate habits, and very particular as to his dress and get-up, and who, moreover, did not swim, and had an objection to salt-water, because, he said, it made him sticky all over, became positively plaintive over this state of things. He would come in from a fatigue-party, sit down upon a box, take down the looking-glass, and groan out his usual complaint : "Good heavens ! here am I, a gentleman by birth and education, living to see myself with my hair cut off, and my face a mask, an absolute mask of dirt. I am positively gritty all over with sand, and am asked to wash in a teaspoonful of water ! "

We were all delighted when we got the order to march forward. Anything more dusty than the march to Koomaylo can hardly be conceived ; but we did not mind it, for we knew we could get as much water as we liked there. We stopped at Koomaylo for nearly a week, and the change from Zoula was delightful ; the heat perhaps was nearly as great, but there was a perfect absence of dust. The Professor brought in several deer. The soldiers used to go off across the hill in chase of troops of enormous baboons, which it is unnecessary to say they

never caught. The dogs came up with them several times; but the minute they seized one of their number, his companions attacked them and beat them off. The number of transport animals at Koomaylo was enormous; but, fortunately, the supply of water from the little American pumps was unfailing. The water, too, was excellent, and actually quenched one's thirst; whereas the distilled water at Zoula had no such effect. The Professor found quartz in abundance scattered about, as indeed there was no difficulty in doing, and affirmed that he was of opinion that gold would be found in the bed rock of the stream; but as he could give no acceptable reason for his belief, and never found a trace of gold—although he was always going out with his basin to wash—his assertion was received with incredulity, especially as we never saw any gold ornaments whatever upon the native women. I have not yet spoken of the natives. I should say that their principal characteristics were laziness and dirt. Still it must be said for the Shohos that in the first respect they are beaten hollow, and in the latter at least rivalled, by their Abyssinian brethren upon the plateau lands. The Shohos could be got to do some sorts of work. They would stand in a chain down to the water in the wells where there were no pumps, and would pass buckets from hand to hand. They would, too, assist to dig wells; whereas an Abyssinian considered it beneath his dignity to do any work whatever. As a general thing, however, the principal occupation of the lives of both people is loafing, pure and simple. They wander about listlessly with their clubs or spears over their shoulders, or squat for hours upon the ground, with their faces pressed hard against their chests and their dirty cotton robes tightly wrapped round both limbs and body. The effect of this is very curious; for the legs of these natives are fairly comparable to pipe-stems, their bodies are little thicker than their legs, and so they look like troops of strange birds, squatting together in groups of five or six.

At last we got the order to move forward in earnest. The bugles were to sound at half-past five in the morning. Why at half-past five in the morning was more than to this moment any one has been able to discover. Every one has to get up before it is light; every one is out of temper; the tents are wet with dew; no one has time to get breakfast before starting; the mules, too, are unfed and unwatered; the tents have to be struck and the packing done before it is fairly light. And why? No one can tell. It is all very well in India, where it is too hot to march in the middle of the day, but here there is no reason whatever for it. The hottest portion of the twenty-four hours by far is between eight and ten, before the breeze springs up. If our march was twenty or five-and-twenty miles in length, there would be some reason in it; but as, since we reached the plateau land, they have not averaged more than eleven or twelve, one is at a loss to understand the motive of getting the troops up and off so early. We have often talked this over in our tent, and always without arriving at any satisfactory explanation. The Professor says that "the official mind is a wonderful and complicated machine." The Drayman

remarks that "he wishes he had the command for a week or two." The Professor says, "Then, in that case, his mind, which is now a singularly simple one, would also become a complicated machine." The Drayman cries "Balderdash!"

I do not describe the gorge up to Sono—what with description and prints you must know all about it by this time. At Sono the Lightweight came in triumphant, but breathless, with a goat he had purchased for a rupee, and which he had had a great struggle with on his way to the tent. The Drayman expressed his admiration of the purchase in suitable terms. The Professor was silent: but at last inquired, "What do you mean to do with that goat?" "Eat him, of course." "Let me know what day you propose the feast shall take place," the Professor said calmly; "I will dine in some other man's tent. That is a he-goat, and fifty years old at least."

Lightweight did not say any more on the subject, nor do I know what he did with the goat; but it certainly never appeared at table. That night was not a peaceful one. We had two alarms—the one from without, the other from within the tent. We were awoke by the sentry posted not far behind us shouting something. That we heeded little. Then came a tremendous jerking at the ropes of the tent, which threatened to bring the whole affair to the ground. We all jumped up and rushed out. There stood a camel, who had strayed up and in his wanderings had nearly brought down our tent. We rushed out and drove him off with stones; the ground, however, being stony, and strewn over with small pieces of the thorny wood, we suffered severely in so doing. The camel appeared to have a peculiar affection for our tent, for he was continually returning throughout the night, and keeping us on the *qui vive* by getting close to the tent-ropes. At one time, however, we really thought he was gone, and were just getting off to sleep when the Lightweight woke us with a piercing cry, "Good gracious, something is biting me horribly! By Jove, I can't get him off! Strike a light, you fellows." We struck a light hastily, and found that the assailant was a large camel-tick, which had fastened upon our friend's leg, and had to be taken off piecemeal, for he would not let go his hold. Several others of his species were also discovered wandering about on the bed, and we found that we had encamped on a spot where camels had been at some time or other stationed, and that the place swarmed with their abominable vermin. They are about the size of sheep-ticks, and are of leaden colour; their bite is very severe, as the Joekey's leg, which was very much swollen up by the morning, sufficiently testified. We did not sleep any more that night, but kept the candle alight, rolled up our beds, and spreading our white waterproof sheets upon the ground, sat on the middle of them, so as to be able to perceive any insect advancing to attack us. I shall not speedily forget that night at Sono.

The next two marches to Hayras Gruddy were wearisome and monotonous in the extreme, round and round endless turnings and windings of the valley, every mile being just like the last. The men, too, felt their

marches very much ; there was no water to be had on the way, and they soon drank up that in their canteens. In addition, many of them not having had any marching for weeks, began to be footsore. And at Rayraz Guddy we felt a sensation which we had not experienced for some time : this was cold. The first to remark upon it was the Lightweight, who is a chilly subject, having no flesh to speak of on his bones. He came in from duty just as dinner was ready, rubbing his hands, " I say, you fellows, it's awfully cold." " Nonsense ! cold ? " the Drayman said. " It's glorious, it's refreshing ; I have not felt so jolly for months." But as the evening wore on even the Drayman was obliged to confess that it was very cold indeed. The native servants went about the camp with their teeth chattering, and kept up such a coughing and groaning all night as only a chilly Hindoo can. Even in the tent, rolled up in rugs, it was undeniably very cold ; and at daybreak cold water was indulged in far more sparingly than usual. Lightweight was quite touching on the subject. He had, he said, exchanged into a regiment in India entirely because he could not bear an English winter, and to be sent to a place which he was certain was nearly as cold as the North Pole, and to have to sleep with only the protection of a thin canvas tent, was very hard upon him. That night, however, was certainly the coldest we experienced, for even at Senafé the thermometer never went below freezing-point, whereas at Rayraz Guddy a film of ice formed over water in the open air. On the bare plain of Senafé we stopped for some time. There we bargained with the natives, did a little shooting, finished our stock of preserved meats and liquors, and had to subsist entirely upon rations, varied occasionally by game and commissariat rum. This last was at first declared to be undrinkable ; but as time wore on it was astonishing how we took to it, and how great a privation it would have been had the issue been stopped. At last, when we were all getting very sick of Senafé, Sir Robert Napier came up, and in less than a week afterwards we received the welcome order to advance. Our first day's march was an easy one, for the sappers had cleared the road ; the second was long but not difficult ; the third, into Attegrat, was short, but there was one tremendous descent. Here we had occasion to admire the exertions of the Professor, who happened to be our baggage-guard. The baggage had started first, but the number of breakdowns was so great that we came upon them at the top of this descent. All down the narrow road on the face of the hill animals were lying down, or standing with their loads on their necks. Half-way down, in a most precipitous spot, a mule was on the point of falling, the load having got nearly on his ears. Two soldiers had by the Professor's direction got in front, and were almost carrying the load, which at that place it was impossible to remove. The weight, however, was too great upon such difficult ground, and mule, baggage, and men had a fair chance of a very ugly tumble—when the Professor, who was behind this mule, seized it by its tail, hung on with all his weight, and so acted as a skid till the animal reached a more level spot, where the load could be taken off. We had a laugh at him as we passed, but

he replied imperturbably, "That animal carried my aneroid barometer and our last dozen of brandy." We were too grateful to the Professor to say another word. Attegrat was more infested by jackals and hyenas than any other place we came to. They made the night hideous with their yells and whinings, and we several times went outside the lines to terrify them with a stone. Of course fire-arms were not allowed. The fair here was very amusing, with its closely packed squatting figures, its animals, cloth, and vegetable markets. The two great events at Attegrat were the visit of Tigré's ambassador and a thunder-storm. The first, as a public event, was perhaps the more important, the second interested us personally very much the more. The ambassador's visit, however, was the prior event, and should therefore be first spoken of. Breakfast was just over, and we were discussing whether or no we should go out for a stroll, when the Professor entered. He had gone out towards Attegrat, he said, to collect antiquities, but that was of course humbug, for up to the present time he had only bought a prayer-book or two, or an old ham, for a dollar each. However, the Professor, as the Jockey says, "fancies himself" upon the subject of antiquarianism, as well as a dozen other-isms, and maintains that his prayer-books are quite different, and very much superior, to any others which either have been or could be purchased in Abyssinia. The Professor does not, even according to his own confession, understand more than three Abyssinian words, and he gives no reasons for the great superiority of his purchases over ours. He says we should not understand him; and I think this possible. The Professor, then, entered, and put an end to our discussion. "If you fellows want to see the King of Tigré, you had better come out at once." And we accordingly went, and found a strange procession approaching the camp, preceded by the warlike music of the stirring tom-tom, surrounded by a *cortège* of warriors, arrayed in dirty cotton, and armed with spears and with matchlocks, probably purchased from Chinese traders about the era 8000 b.c. Of the ambassador himself it can only be said that he was like unto his following, as dirty and as vagabond-looking as the rest of them. Presently our bugles sounded, and we had to buckle on our swords and form up in front of the camp. Thence we were marched in front of the Commander-in-Chief's tent, and were drawn up with our bands behind us at a distance of about fifty yards. The rest of the troops also formed in line, and then the mongrel procession marched up and the ambassador entered the tent, the two military bands playing as loudly as they could, and entirely different air. However, I do not suppose he noticed anything extraordinary about it. The Professor, who was not on duty, was in the tent, and told us afterwards that the conversation which ensued was the very dullest thing he ever listened to. He suggested a number of topics of interest which might have been advantageously discussed; among others, some scientific point, which we understood to be the relation which the ancient Coptic language had, in the opinion of the ambassador, in the formation,

modification, and origin of the primitive Abyssinian dialects. Some of his other suggestions were equally remarkable for abstruseness, and he was strongly advised to embody them in a Memo, and to present them to Sir Robert Napier in case of another interview. The rain affected us much more intimately than the durbar had done. It had threatened rain for two previous days, and we therefore paid little attention to the heavy black cloud. When it began, however, it came down in a sheet, and in five minutes we had a stream three inches deep rushing through the tent. Before we had time to prepare, the beds upon the ground were under water, and everything was soaked through. The Professor—who alone had stuck to his bed—sat upon it, chuckling at his superior sagacity; but the laugh went against him afterwards, when it was discovered, upon turning out everything after the shower was over, that some tobacco which he had that morning taken from his trunk, and put upon the ground under his bed to be out of the way, was quite saturated. Up to Attegrat we had been very well off for tent accommodation, as we had been only three in one of the large tents known as “native routies”; but these were now to be left behind, and we were packed three in a bell-tent. It was at Ad Abaga, however, three days' march farther on—where we waited for five days for the King of Tigré—that our ideas of comfort received the rudest shock. The Drayman brought in the news. (The Drayman is perhaps too devoted to his personal comforts; he is a peaceful man, but is apt to get extremely irate if interfered with.) He came in red hot; he was in a passion; something serious had evidently happened. “Have you seen the general order?” We had not. What was it? The Drayman steadied himself to tell us: it was evidently most serious. At last he spoke. “It is proposed that the troops march forward without either rum, tea, or sugar.” We were silent; the news was bad beyond our worst anticipation. No rum, tea, or sugar! it seemed impossible. The Professor spoke, “For myself,” he said, with that calmness which distinguishes him, and which was only disturbed upon the great occasion of the destruction of his tobacco at Attegrat—“For myself, I care little; but the troops will all be in hospital in a fortnight. No constitution in the world can stand hard work and nothing but dirty water to drink.” “I am very sorry for the troops,” the Jockey said, “but I am quite as sorry for myself. The tea and sugar I should not mind.” As indeed he would not; for his tastes having been vitiated by an early life among sporting associates, he eschews milder drinks, and even at breakfast drinks arrack and water, utterly disregarding any hints upon our part as to the fair allowance of spirits. “The tea and sugar I should not mind; but how in the name of goodness am I to go on without spirits? What a fool I was to come into the army! To think that I should have to come to drink nothing but dirty water. I consider that Government took the price of my commission under false pretences. I paid so much for the honour of fighting, of doing innumerable parades and other hateful work; and all this for the mere interest

of my own money. But I did not bargain for drinking dirty water. I never read the Articles of War, but I am certain that dirty water is not as much as mentioned." Lightweight's lament was so earnest and pathetic that we had a laugh, and felt better tempered at once. This Draconian decree, which, if carried out, would certainly have been attended with the worst results as to the health of the troops, was never enforced; for such an abundance of stores and native carriage was obtained at Antalo, that rations, although upon a reduced scale, are still issued to the troops of both rum and tea and sugar. One of the greatest privations, as far as officers are concerned, is want of candles. None have been issued since we landed, and the consequence is, that there are now hardly any left in camp. Substitutes have, of course, been improvised: empty tins of chocolate have been converted into rough lamps; and in these, ghee, or native butter, is consumed with a more or less satisfactory result. A consequence is, that very early hours are passed, and by nine o'clock the great majority of officers are in bed. Indeed, there is little to promote conviviality. Many brought cards with them; but even a rubber is hardly a sociable game when played almost in the dark, and without any accompanying refreshment. I have only seen one game attempted since we landed. Until we reached this place, the prospects of the campaign looked dreary indeed. We could bring no supplies except meat at any price. The transport train was taxed to the utmost to keep our immediate wants supplied, and no one could see the end of the business at all. Thanks, however, to the enormous supplies of flour and other stores which we have purchased here, thanks to the unlimited amount of native transport which has been offered to us, we shall go forward in a few days with every hope of being at Magdala in three days from the date of starting hence. Every one has the greatest confidence in Sir Robert Napier; and we look forward to being out of this country by June. All are especially anticipating a fight at Magdala. The Jockey says that he shall not mind even short commons of rum if King Theodore does but fight. The Drayman pooh-poohs the idea of fighting with such fellows as these. The Professor utters mysterious sayings about manuscripts and antiquities he expects, or says he expects, to find at Magdala. Why Theodore should bother himself with manuscripts and antiquities is known only to the Professor himself.





A N APPEAL FOR PROTECTION

B r o n y e .

CHAPTER V.

U P H I L L .



THE whole scene had come and gone like a bad dream. No one alluded to it in that stern and silent household. Cecily did not even know whether her father had seen her distress, or suspected who the dead man was, and Rupert kept the strange story in his heart, and never uttered a word. Grief, when it does not melt and improve, makes a nature bitterer and harder, and Cecily seemed to grow both : the strongest wines are said to make the sharpest vinegar.

The boy, sternly treated and repressed at home, was beginning to feel the pleasure of inspiring the fear and sense of hatred which he himself endured. No master is so cruel as the fag who has been unmercifully bullied ; the slave who is kicked and beaten delights in nothing so much as being able to pass on the kicks and blows. Rupert was nearly fifteen, and the bad spirits were fast winning the battle in him.

One evening he was leaning over a gate, through which the cows were to be driven home ; there was a glorious array of gold and crimson clouds, but it was not the beautiful sunset (on which he was turning his back) that made him pause, but only the feeling of evening : the sensation—not the idea of rest—was upon him. The cows had strayed up "Ave Lane." Roads there were scarcely any in the district ; but the track>wound along, with a magnificent margin of green turf on both sides : capital galloping ground, arched over by tall elms and ash, with here and there a great oak standing out upon the grass. "Ave Lane" led to the "Bedeswell." The Catholicism of so many hundred years crops up like the boulders left of some destroyed strata of rock. It is only wonderful indeed that remains of it are not oftener found in the tenacious memory of the people, when one considers the strong hold it possessed for so many hundred years over every event in life.

The cows were passing in and out of the patches of bright light and green shadow which lay across the path, the day had been excessively hot, and they had taken refuge in the shady lane from the glare of the sunshine. At the well stood a very little girl, trying to dip a small can into the lowered water: the light fell on her bright hair and striped blue-and-white petticoat, and Rupert watched her in the idle way with which one's eyes receive pictures of things that do not concern them. In our Northern nations, the sense of beauty is the result of cultivation; it does not often grow naturally among the uneducated.

Suddenly a very inoffensive cow, whose affections had been wounded by the loss of her calf, uplifted her voice lugubriously, and lowered her horns at the child, who took refuge in the greatest possible fright by Rupert's side, and seized hold of his hand, still clinging closely to her can. He looked down surprised at the small trusting thing beside him; the habit of feeling and inspiring fear and dislike had become so strong in him that the sense of being appealed to for help and protection seemed strange. She kept close to him as he slowly drove back his cows.

"Where do ye come from?" said he to her at last.

"Father and mother's come to live at Old Moor. Father was old Mrs. Blizzard's nevvy." Rupert knew that fresh tenants had just arrived at the farm nearest to Hawkshill. "The well's gone dry in the house, and mother can't abide the water in the yard, so I'm fetching this along o' her tea. Won't you set me across the field where there's the big bull?"

Rupert went moodily and unwillingly on with the child, hardly speaking till they reached the farmyard gate, where the father was standing with a pitchfork in his hand looking out for her.

"What, ye was afraid o' the dun cow, wer ye? I know her were bawling for her cauf all the night through, that's where 'twas," said the farmer, turning to Rupert, with a tender smile at his child, the apple of his eye. "And so the little maid have a coaxed ye to bring of her home, have she? She's a big little coward, that's what she is." He was a great burly man, with a voice like a trumpet, but a quiet temper, and a nature like one of his own immense sleek cart-horses.

"So you're Pangbourne's grandson, up at Hawkshill? I was a coming for to see him about that broken fence into the lane after sundown. You go and speak to mother: she's an uncommon lassid to-night, what wi' the heat and the bad water—it tastes so it does, agin the churn-house, says she, as she can't drink it, and there were nobody but the little wench to go for a can to the spring."

Rupert followed unwillingly into the house. There is a certain point where it is easier for shyness and awkwardness to go on than to turn back. "Oh, if I had but run away at first," he muttered to himself as Little Mary dragged him into the front kitchen.

"Eh, my dusky," cried her mother as they came in, "why, I've been

quite put out and chastised wi' thinking of ye, ye were so long and the bull so mischiefful."

Mrs. Blizzard was a good woman and a good housewife, but her appearance belied her. Gentility was her stumbling-block and rock of offence. It was gentility under difficulties, for she hardly ever saw any one beyond the precincts of her own house and at church throughout the year ; but the fine words which she used right and left were such a source of enjoyment to her that no one could grudge her the satisfaction. She was a perfect mistress of the language, and "not a word, however far out of hearing, but came at her command ;" and as she spoke the dialect of the county in great perfection, it added to the effect. She wore long dangling curls, and had a generally lackadaisical, affected air, which in that secluded place was curiously inappropriate.

"And how do you do, Mr. Pangbourne ?" said she, languidly. "I really suffer such inability with the heat as I could scarce get through the butter ; and butter, Mr. P., is a thing that yer know it won't come right, not by no means."

"The cow run at me, mother, and he brought me in," said Mary.

"Well, 'tis a mercy, child, as yer found any one about, I'm sure. It's particular lonesome and tiresome here. I've been accustomed to good company like, where we was before, t'other side county, and it seems horo as there ain't nothink but the cows to speak to (which I'm sure there's enough o' them," she added, parenthetically ; "seventy has the master, and forty on 'em in milk). I just straggled down the garden but now : the perfumerie of the clove pinks is re'lly beautiful, but I was so shattered with the butter as I could hardly go ; and then the smell of them clats, which I ain't used to, seemed just to terrify me so as I'm all in a muzz."

But before Mrs. Blizzard had nearly finished her complaints, as she all the while went on setting the tea-things, Rupert had torn away his hand from Mary and escaped at a run.

A day or two after, he had been driven into a furious passion by his grandfather's taunts. "We aynt used to no such ways at Hawkshill," said he, "rakin' o' oats o' that fashion all of a ruck, and I won't ha' it done." Rupert flung himself behind a stack in the field, where he lay throwing the loose straw angrily about him, when a little hand was laid on his shoulder.

"Have you hurted yourself, poor boy ?" said Mary, tenderly.

"Go away, I don't want you," he answered, in a savage tone. The child remained sitting silently by him ; they were both quite still. "What are you waiting for ?" said he—a little less wrathfully, however, this time.

"Nothing," replied she. He raised his head : she was kneeling in the grass watching him ; he turned away again. "Ruby, I think I saw the hedgepig run but now into that deep hole in the bank where ye telled me the rabbits had their burries."

It is a great art to be able to administer the right consolation at the

right moment. Rupert started up, and in another minute was in pursuit of the "hedge-pig," which, luckily for itself, had retired; but the boy plunged his arm up to the shoulder into the burrow, and brought up successively five infant rabbits.

"Oh, Ruby!" cried the child, in an ecstasy of delight as he put one warm little downy ball after another into her lap. It was like a conjuring trick or the gifts of a good fairy.

"They'll make a nice pie," said Rupert, barbarously.

"They mustn't be eaten," sobbed Mary, and with an effort of heroic virtue she put them back into their hole to save their lives. "You'll come down to us to-morrow?" said she, anxiously, getting hold of his hand and afraid she might have displeased him. "Mother allays has a pie o' Sundays," she added, in conciliation.

There was a cloth on the table as he awkwardly shuffled into the kitchen the next day, and Mrs. Blizzard insisted on his washing his hands. "What a deal o' rout about nothing, the pie ain't worth it," grumbled he, intensely bored by such forms and ceremonies.

"And now," said Mary, getting on his knee after dinner, "you're a goin' to show me the pictures in the big book."

All went on well at first, as she undertook the explanations herself (and at great length.) At last, however,—

"What's that chap doin' wi' the babby and the big knife?" said he.

"Oh, Ruby, it's Solomon and the judging and the mothers!" said she, much shocked; "don't ye see the letters?"

"I can't read, and I don't want to," answered he, doggedly; "it's all very well for girls."

"Nay, lad, there thou'st quite out: it ain't nought to be proud on. A farming man wants it more nor a girl, wi' the markets," said the farmer, who heard him as he went out at the door. "A man's a deal more o' a man if he can read; but maybe ye're too old for to learn, that's one thing."

"I could do it fast enow an I choosed," muttered Rupert, angrily.

"Won't you learn, Ruby dear?" said the little girl, in a low voice; "the letters is so quick to get, and *Tom Thumb's* such nice readin'—when it isn't Sunday," she added, conscientiously.

Partly from opposition and partly from ambition, Rupert set doggedly down to begin, and when the farmer returned he found them hard at work. Presently the infant professor jumped down from her pupil's knee and ran up to him.

"Father, what does p-l-o-u-g-h spell?" said she, in a low whisper.

The farmer's jolly laugh pealed under the rafters of the old kitchen.

"'Tis so comikle for to see her like a little dog a carryin' the word in her mouth as 'twere, for to learn the lad."

"Now, father," said Mrs. Blizzard, "don't you go for to daunt 'um like that. I've been quite cheered and nourished in my heart for to see them. She's a very choice child is Mary, and ye mustn't go for to backen her when she've a mind to do for to improve the lad."

Mary certainly did not require to be discouraged in her task. Rupert was by no means an easy or an agreeable pupil, though he was clever enough.

"I hate them books," he broke out from time to time as the lessons went on, flinging them on the ground and contradicting his patient little instructress savagely; but by the united efforts of the whole family he learned to read for all that.

He had established a curious kind of influence over the child: she attended implicitly to all his whims and obeyed all his behests as far as they were possible, and endured his reproaches when they were not; and Mrs. Blizzard was often a good deal annoyed at the sort of way in which he tyrannized over her.

"There's a curate what's to come instead of old Mr. Rogers a ridin' over from Norlands," said Mary one day, "and he's a goin' to lodge here, as there isn't another place convenient."

"Then I'll ne'er come nigh the house agin," answered the boy, violently. "I can't abide a parson. What for did you let 'um do it? you don't care a bit about me."

Mary looked as pained as if there had been reason in his complaints, but she said nothing.

CHAPTER VI.

FIRE IN THE RICK-YARD.

TOWARDS the beginning of winter Claude Morris, the parson, appeared, though only for a few days to read himself in. He was a very young man, fresh from college, who had taken the miserable curacy of Avonhoe as a title to orders. There was no sort of parsonage belonging to it, and after some search he had established himself with Mrs. Blizzard as the best chance of comfort. He was a small thin man, with very light hair and eyebrows, and a generally washed-out look not at all impressive. "He ain't much of a one for to look at," had been the verdict as he passed through the "street" * (consisting of five houses). There was something, however, about his sermon which made his hearers, used to the droning of the big old rector, look about them as they sat on the curious carved benches; not at all, however, approvingly.

Claude, after speaking to a few of his hearers and receiving somewhat shy and ungracious answers, walked away, and as the scanty congregation streamed out at the door, it discussed the new parson by no means altogether to his advantage.

"It were writ, and I don't consider it be Gospel when 'tis writ," said Benyam, consequentially—who, for a wonder, had graced the church on this great occasion, and as he rarely troubled the service was extremely particular about the quality of his doctrine. "The other t'other were a man

* "Watting Street," "Akeman Street," "street" meaning only road.

o' eddication like, and a run on as fast as a mill-stream. And I don't see what call this un has for a' them hard words about sin. I bean't a bit worse nor my neighbours as he should talk at me so" (Benyam was convinced that the preacher had been addressing himself specially to him). "And then a' that about the Devil hammering away at us like the bullets agin the church door, and we was to kip 'im out same wise; it isn't in tho Bible I tak' it!"

They were still standing in the porch, where the evidences of Cromwell's assault were clearly visible in the bullet-holes which remained in the stout old oaken door, to which the preacher had appealed, to the great scandal of this critical part of his audience.

"Yes, I bean't sure as it's just lucky," said the old ratcatcher, who generally found his ferrets much too active on Sundays to enable him to go anywhere where it would not be considered seemly to take them with him, but had also made a sacrifice to hoar^{the} new parson. "You may scrat and scrat away ever so long, but if ye perseworcs and comes up to the dodder^{*} at last, he shows fight; and I take it if them preachers angers a body about his sins, he'll not git 'um for to come to church at all, for to be hit betwixt the eyes o' that fashion!"

"I wish as everybody'd be after minding their own business and let we alone," replied Benyam. "There's the poor-rate so high as I can scarce make the rent and my livin' out o' the land."

"What's the use o' them quarter sessions, and what's the magistrates about as they duon't look to sick like, as they did a ought to, I should like to know?" said Farmer Bathe.

"And the Parliament House," growled Benyam, "and the rents so mortal high?"

"Well, I'm glad I ha'n't anythink further to do wi' land, nor rents either; but I must be arter gettin' off home. How wonderful short tho days be," said Simon, remembering the ferrets.

Rupert had sauntered on, not much interested by the discourse of the village magnates, and, turning the corner of the church, he came upon a group complaining of Benyam and his fellow-farmers as they were doing of their superiors.

The boy himself was almost without any class feeling; he was "only a lodger" in his grandfather's house, and was known to care extremely little for what went on there. His arrival accordingly made no difference in their talk.

"I tell 'ee what, we won't be treated so," said one man. "We'll have bread or blood, that's where 'tis; we're good subjects of the king, and if he know'd how we was done by, he wouldn't ha' had us ground down this 'ere way."

"Bread's up at a shilling," said another. "Why, the bakers ought to be hanged for 't."

* Badger.

" And the millers, too, for flour being so high."

" And the farmers along wi' em, they ought," added a third. " Hav'e heerd there were another stack fired o' Friday, and a very good thing it were. I say it were well done."

To all which Rupert listened with much interest and no distaste.

It was an anxious time : the autumn had set in cold, wet, and comfortless, and half the parish was already out of work. We have happily nearly forgotten those dark days in England : the state of antagonism, the dumb warfare, the ill-will that existed just before the passing of the Reform Bill, when a deep-rooted discontent divided classes, when whole parishes were eaten up by poor-rate. The sort of deadlock produced by the corn-laws, the poor-laws, the high price of bread and of everything wearable and eatable, the low wages, the ignorance of the poor, the apathy of the employers, the reflex also, probably, of the wave of disquiet which was moving all over Europe, produced a ferment which was felt in every part of England, but particularly in the Midland counties, and nowhere more than about Avonhoe.

It was supposed that the burning of ricks and breaking of machines would somehow increase wages, and both were going on that winter to a fearful extent. There were few resident landlords in the neighbourhood to soften the intercourse between masters and toilers, much waste land, small owners who could do little, absentees, many of whom never came near their property, and college owners who would do nothing ; and the consequence was a state of disorganization which it is only surprising did not terrify our rulers more quickly. But facts were slow in being appreciated in those days, and the want of communication made each district more isolated from its neighbours and the rest of the country, than we can now well realize.

During the last months of that winter there were few nights when a fire might not be seen from the high ground of Avonhoe, and Rupert spent his spare time in watching for the shooting up of a flame, or the "bouquet" of sparks from a rick, with the sort of enjoyment he would have had in an exhibition of rockets. It requires a certain amount of experience, and also of imagination, for any one to put himself in the place of another, to conceive what he has not himself gone through—and children and uneducated people are peculiarly without this sense. To carry on a series of thoughts so far as to attach a consequence to anything, requires more education than we generally imagine. The present is all in all to them. A great outburst of sparks is a pretty thing, so one boy throws gunpowder into the fire, and blows out his own or somebody else's eyes ; and another will burn down a cottage or a rick-yard with no greater amount of malice or wickedness than prompts a civilized man to make an unkind observation at dinner. Cause and effect are not a necessary sequence in their eyes, but each case is an isolated event.

It was a dank, dark evening in November a few days after, and as Rupert drove the cows home the mists began to rise. There was a little moon, and the sky was clear on the top of the hill, but all over the plain

below spread an immense sea of white fog, which, indeed, hung more or less through the winter over the stiff deep clay district, seamed with an elaborate system of ridge and furrow, its only drainage, which had been carried out with infinite labour, in some remote antiquity, over every field, whether plough or grass land ; in spite of which the heavy soil lay soaked in wet the whole winter through. Ague (now hardly known) was the ordinary lot of every one, old and young, as common as measles or whooping-cough, while the excessive difficulty of getting fuel made life very wretched.

If it had not been, however, for its associations, to the eye the sight was extremely beautiful : the thick white fleecy solid mass (the whole tail of the comet of '58 was said not to contain so much matter as a yard of —shire fog) lay at the boy's feet, perfectly flat, rising only to a certain height, out of which the promontories of low hills and distant headlands stood out like the cliffs and line of coast of a real sea, with here and there the top of a tall tree lifting its head, apparently up to its neck in water.

Rupert, when he had turned the cows into the straw-yard, stood for a moment watching, not the fog sea, which was far too ordinary a sight to notice, but for his beloved fireworks. Suddenly a sheaf of sparks arose from what he believed to be Yardley End, which was about a mile off in the plain. He smiled with delight, and then a deeper feeling arose : the boys at the farm had, he believed, been among the chief instigators of Quick's death, and he hated them with all his heart.

"Farmer Bathe grinds the poor," he had often heard it said ; "he's a hard man about wages in winter." Mischief, at all events, was pleasant to see, and worth risking his grandfather's reproaches ; and diving down into the sea of fog—which was beginning, however, to lift—he made off towards the flame as fast as he could, though, when he reached the foot of the hill, he had to guide himself at first by the hedges. Soon, however, the angry glare of the red light appeared under a heavy grey cloud of smoke, while the lurid look of the burning rick increased in brightness every moment as he came up. A great collection of people were standing about round the homestead, staring and doing nothing. The farmer himself, and two or three of his men, were flinging buckets of muddy water out of a horse-pond over the rick and the neighbouring sheds and stacks ; the thimblefuls seemed almost to increase the flame, but no one in the crowd stirred to help.

"Twill catch on to the dwelling-home," said one man calmly to another—when Charles Blount came riding up in front of a small engine kept at a neighbouring manor-house. The country had been beset by the plague for several months, and it was in constant requisition. He had seen the fire at a distance as he was returning home from hunting, and came up to help. He was out frequently with the hounds over all that part of the country, and was known by sight to most of the people ; and his cheery voice—the mixture of command and undoubting leadership

which the English peasant loves—told immediately even on that unwilling, surly throng. “What! no water but this muddy stuff? why, you’ll ruin the engine in no time. Make a chain down to the brook,” said he. For an instant they hesitated, but at that moment Claude Morris came breathlessly up, having heard that mischief was afoot. His new pastor was the very last man whom Rupert wished to see, and he slipped behind a shed.

“Oh, we’ll soon get up a chain,” answered Claude, cheerfully, taking hold of a man on one side and a boy on the other, and putting a bucket into their hands. Imitation, the instinct of obedience, some sort of compunction, all acted upon them, and in a few minutes the water began to arrive and the engine to play. At that moment a second stack burst into a blaze on the other side the yard. Claude plunged behind the sheds, and saw a black shadow escaping round the corner: he ran after it at full speed, but, unused to the place, he fell in a “juicy” gateway, and when he got up there was no one in sight. He returned to the yard, where the fire—which hitherto had been kept under—was now rapidly spreading; sheaves of sparks flew in all directions, blazing pieces of straw rose like rockets, and the flames reddened the horizon all round. It was a most successful exhibition of fireworks.

Charles Blount had climbed on the roof of the dwelling-house, beating out the burning rain of sparks on the thatch, striving to keep the straw wet; he was now, however, obliged to come down and confine his exertions to directing the men how to carry out the furniture, and helping to lead the horses out of the stables, for the poor bewildered farmer had entirely lost his head. It was a still night, the fog had risen, and the red glare made the place bright in a circle all round, where the black shapes of men moving rapidly to and fro looked very diabolic. The fire from two points at once was too much for their exertions; it went out at last because there was nothing left to burn, and a long line of blackened and ruined sheds was all that remained of the wretched farmer’s possessions.

“And he aint insured,” said one of the bystanders, tranquilly. “He never had forecast enough, not for a farmer; and the more he did the less he arned.”

“Poor fellow!” answered Charles, with much more compassion in his voice and manner. “I hoped we’d got the better of it at one time, too.”

“I’m sure if the stacks hadn’t been fired a second time from behind you’d have saved him. It’s a frightful state of feeling. You’re not hurt?” inquired Claude anxiously, looking at the torn and smoked condition of the young squire’s red coat and once white breeches.

“Oh, nothing. I’ve just singed my hands and bruised my foot. I’m all right,” replied Charles, laughing. “I’m very much obliged to you. May I ask who you are? You’re the only creature who really helped a bit, or who cared a straw about the whole concern. It’s not a pleasant state of things for a landlord’s son to see growing up,” said he, shaking hands warmly with his new ally; “though I’m sure I don’t see how it’s to be

altered. I daresay you parsons would say we've ourselves to thank for a good deal of it."

"I shouldn't think it's the individuals who are to blame; your father's tenants are well enough off, I believe. It's the system. How can men pay decent wages with poor-rates up where they are?"

"My father was offered the fee-simple of a whole parish the other day for quite a trifle, if he'd undertake to pay the rates; they were more than twenty shillings in the pound," said Charles. "You'll come and see us at Hartley Grange? We're not all leading the cat-and-dog life in this county which they seem to do on this side the Sooeech," he added, smiling.

CHAPTER VII.

FOWLING IN THE CHURCH TOWER.

CLAUDE MORRIS had been kept away longer than he expected by the death of his father, and it was some months before he regularly settled at Avonhoe. He tried in vain to get at the household at Hawkshill: the old farmer was sullen, obstinate, and disagreeable; Cecily's stern, impenetrable silence was even more hopeless; and his heart yearned to the boy in his cheerless, hard home: but Rupert was always off, as if he had been a wild hawk himself, whenever he saw the curate. He even refused to come nearer the Blizzards' house than the garden-wicket, where he would whistle till the little girl came out to him. "Mary," said he, one evening that spring, "there's a nest of jacks in the church tower; us'll go and take it. Yer must be very still, and do as I tell 'ee, if you're to be my little wife; and then you shall have a jack for to hop about and learn un for to talk."

The curious pair went up to the church together, Mary hanging on to his hand, at the time when, every evening, the old sexton opened the door to ring the curfew,—a ceremony still religiously performed at Avonhoe. Rupert hid in the porch, watching through the holes made by Cromwell's bullets in the door for the right moment. When the official back was turned, he slipped in, and ran hurriedly up the tower stairs. By creeping out of a small window which he had marked, and along a stone string-course some forty feet from the ground, a fall from which would have been certain death, he reached a gargoyle at the angle which carried off the rain-water from the roof of the tower, in which the jackdaws had made their nest. Meantime the sad sound of the curfew tolled like the passing-bell of the day in the quiet evening air (*e paja il giorno pianger che si muore*); meaning so much, with so many memories of the past attached to it, understood so little by those who heard.

Half-hidden in a tall turret with a pointed roof, at the end of the adjoining wall of the Tracys' destroyed old manor-house, stood his trembling little accomplice, watching the boy's perilous climb.

"Oh, take care, Rupert; don't ye go no furder; let the jacks be," whispered she in dismay, as she saw the boy suspended in the air, on a

footing not four inches wide. He reached the nest, however, in safety, crammed the birds into his pocket, and edged his way slowly back again, hanging on by his eyelids. At that moment the old sexton, having rung his bell and locked the door, was returning home to his tea, when, moved by the grief of the father and mother jacks, who were flying madly after the ravisher of their offspring, he looked up as Rupert nearly reached the tower-window. "Ye rascal! Don't I see yer 'ind legs? I knows ye! I'll warm ye, ye wicked young jackanapes," shouted Jared, horribly. What was it to him that the boy, if he fell, would be dashed to pieces, compared with this dreadful violation of church property!

Rupert, greatly startled, turned, let fall most of his jackdaws, stumbled and fell, luckily for him inwards and forwards; and while the irate sexton hurried back into the church, he scrambled a little farther down the tower stairs, and leaped through a lower window on to the flat leaden roof of the church, shaking the remaining bird almost to death, who lamented himself aloud; and while old Jared was wasting his time by crawling up to the window where he had seen the boy, and then fumbling over the door which led on to the roof, Rupert had time to creep along the parapet and let himself down on the top of the high old garden-wall which joined the church, along which he rode triumphantly astride till he reached the convenient bough of a tree, into which he swung himself. He was sliding comfortably down the trunk, when, to his horror, at the foot stood the young "paarson" himself, who, hearing the noise, had just come up.

"What's all this?" cried Claude, with a burst of laughter, as he saw the boy's face of dismay and heard old Jared swearing furiously somewhere up in the air at the desecration of the church, as, of course, he had a right to do—"for that in the captain's but a choleric word, which in the soldier is flat blasphemy." "Don't swear so, Jared," he called up aloft. "What can you all have been about? Oh, it's only the ecclesiastical jacks! Let me look at them."

And Rupert, who throughout his life had been equally reproached for what he did and did not do, stood in utter amazement at such strange conduct.

"What! so little Mary's helping too, is she? I saw her just round the garden-wall," said Claude, as he went away.

The first parallel was opened in the sieve of Rupert's heart.

"There ain't but one jack left, ye see," said he to the little girl, as they went off together, "so you can't have none."

"No, Ruby," answered Mary, resignedly.

A few days after, however, Claude heard the boy's whistle, and went out.

"If my grandad finds the jack he'll wring his neck for 'im, so I've a brought him down to you," Rupert was saying, as he gave his orders, rather imperiously, as to its nourishment and education, to his obedient handmaid: he was leaning upon the little gate, his black tangled hair

hanging over his eyes with their eager wild gaze, and a sort of untamed savagery about his whole look.

" Mayn't I give him the littlest morsel of bread ? " said Mary.

" I wonder whether he eats flies," observed Claude, apparently entirely absorbed in contemplating the interesting jack, and without moving hand or foot, a process recommended by the great Mr. Waterton in taming wild animals.

" Isn't it beautiful to see him ? " cried the little girl, watching the fluffy fright with ecstasy.

" There's a wonderful story about what a raven could do in this book," said Claude, taking one from his pocket. :

" Oh, that's what you went all the way to Sainton for ? " observed Mary.

He had walked ten miles, and taken much pains to get it, and carried it about with him for several days. He began to read, while Rupert listened, with wide-open eyes, spell-bound, without stirring.

" If you come down to-morrow we will read the next story : it's about a bear," said his new friend. The town was taken.

From that time the boy went down to Old Moor whenever he could get away in the evening. At first, like Scheherezade or a sensation novel in a Magazine, Claude always left some fate unsettled, to be continued next time ; but very soon the boy began to read for himself, to think, to enjoy using his mind.

" I don't see as there be no use nor signification whatsoever in a' that readin'," said old Benyam, doggedly, one night. " I've done fair and fain wi'out it all my days."

" I've a finished my work," answered the lad, fiercely. " No one can't fault what I choose to do o' the evenin'."

" And what may ye be doin' of in them shelves ? " said his mother, crossly, as she saw him burrowing among the clothes in the old press.

" I wants my Sunday jacket," he answered, sullenly.

" What new-fangled fancy's that ? wearin' yer good clothes o' week-days ? " replied she, angrily.

" I'll wear un when I chooses ; I works hard enow and gets no pay," said Rupert, angrily, dragging out the jacket. " And you've never mended that hole in the sleeve nor sewed on them buttons ! They'd do it for me down at Old Moor fast enough."

Cecily was beginning to grow very jealous of their influence over her boy at the farm ; she snatched the jacket from him, and began to sew on the buttons as if she were stabbing the stuff.

" Don't keep me : make haste ! I'm late as 'tis," said he, fretting and fuming to be gone. " Where's the soap got to ? "

" And where's the use o' a' that washing too," grumbled his grandfather. " I've done well enough wi'out the taste of water."

" Mr. Morris always washes his hands," was Rupert's only answer.

There is no education like that of personal influence.

" I don't take much account o' the paerson," the old man went on,

setting his dogged old fists on his knees, as he rested his crabbed stick against his blue-ribbed stockings in the chair by the chimney-corner. "He went on to me ever so t'other day as 'There are four corners to my bed,' warn't a prayer. 'Mathew, Mark, Luke, and John,' if them isn't Scriptur I'd like to know what were. And what may he be a larnin' o' ye?" he ended, somewhat contemptuously.

"He's a teached me geography and figurin', and Athens, where St. Paul praach to the Ephesians," said the boy, eagerly, anxious to put the finest face on his friend's instructions.

"Furrin parts," muttered Benyam. "And I don't think much o' them. I've been to Naughton myself, and that's more nor ten miles off, and I said says I, If them be furrin parts, us might as lief have bided at home. Me and mine's been on the ground hundered o' years, and should know. Us was the best part of a day a gettin' to Naughton. There was the deep piece at the Three Lanes' End, and that juicy bit at Slush Gate; and we was nigh upon two hours gettin' the cart out o' the slough in the Welsh Lane."

The difficulty of getting about produced by the want of roads in a purely clay district is now almost inconceivable. Rights of way over fields, with a gate every hundred yards, and a Slough of Despond at each like the description in Bunyan—who "probably took it from some country road in his own neighbourhood"—were the only means of communication; and the six horses of our ancestors were no piece of vain show, but necessary to move their heavy coaches a single mile.

"Well, I can't wait," broke in Rupert, with a sort of haughty toss of his head as he went off, his jacket half done.

"How like his father he do seem when he've a got that look on him," muttered Cecily to herself, almost fiercely, and yet with a sort of pride.

"If you didn't uphold him a wasting o' his time like that," said the old man, angrily, "he wouldn't go for to do it."

"If I choose for him to be a scholard," answered she, coldly, "it's my look-out; ye pay us nought, and he's a right to his time when work's done."

She and her boy were now of far too much importance in the farm to be thwarted beyond measure.

Claude Morris, fresh from college, would willingly have taught Rupert all he knew, but the intricacies of grammar he found it impossible to infuse. Any amount, however, of facts geographical, historical, even scientific, the boy could master, and for everything connected with numbers he had a decided talent.

Claude was standing at the gate as Rupert appeared breathless, watching Rosamond Hedges the butter-carrier unloading a box of his college books. The "*Rosa mundi*" was a grizzled old man, with sharp red eyes and the sharp temper incident to the mind of one overcharged with minute and contradictory directions. He drove a very small donkey tied on to a very small cart, which sufficed for the limited wants of the district. The

driving a donkey-cart gives an extraordinary feeling of superiority to the rest of the human race: no Grand Duke or Imperial Highness whirling along with six horses is ever impressed with the amount of contempt for the humble traveller on foot that the possessor of a donkey-cart seems to feel. If you look at the face of the driver, whether male or female, old or young, there is a beatific sense of superiority which is never seen elsewhere, and must be a source of the keenest enjoyment.

"Books is they," said Rosamund. "Well, they're as heavy as stones, that's all I can say. And what's the use of such a many on 'um? One book's much the same as another, take 'em by their looks, for all I could ever see," said he, looking after Claude, who, after unpacking the box, was carrying in his treasures with the sort of affectionate care which a woman would show to a baby, smoothing their outraged corners tenderly, and fondly turning over their pages.

"Mr. Morris has got all them for to learn 'me," said Rupert, importantly. "I shall go away and get to be a great man, and then I shall come home and marry ye, Mary; but ye must learn a great deal first if you're to be my little wife."

"Yes, Rupert," answered Mary meekly.

Rupert had by no means yet learned that, though it may be good to have a giant's strength, it's not good to use it like a giant.

It was growing dusk that evening, and Rupert pushed away the problem which he was trying to work, and got up and stretched himself. "Well, I can't find it out, and I won't be told," said he, doggedly.

"Put it away. You'll be clearer about it to-morrow, my boy, and it's too dark to read," answered Claude, throwing away his own book and drawing his chair up to the great old fire-place. He took up the tongs and began to pile up the blazing ends of wood and heap the embers round the new piece of turf which Rupert laid on: a pleasant semblance of occupation which employs the hands while it seems to enable the busy thoughts to be elsewhere: it was one of the few luxuries which he allowed himself.

Mrs. Blizzard put her head in at the door at the moment. "Well, 'tis wonderful kind to be sure, as you are, Mr. Morris, how you do trouble yourself for the destruction o' that boy! I just looked in to see what you'd be pleased to take for supper. The eggs is so dubious sometimes, and I saw how you disannulled 'um yesterday."

"Oh, it did not signify; I didn't care," answered Claude, with a smile.

"Well, round ye as I will, I can't say as I ever find ye takes to one thing more nor another, Mr. Morris; it's easy enough you is to please," said Mrs. Blizzard, putting her hand to her head, "and 'tis a good thing for one so put about as me. The butter, to be sure, do so weigh upon one's mind, as it's quite a check to one's feelings!"

As she left the room, little Mary—who had long been watching her opportunity—came in, nursing a sick chick wrapped in flannel. "Mr. Morris, won't you tell us a story?" said she. It was the witching time in the evening,—*entre chien et loup*. "Ruby, you can't work any more

to-night," she went on, turning to the window—where he still stood with the slate and pencil in his hand. "Come, dear, and ask him too." And she brought herself and her little stool to besiege the absent man.

"Put that away, Mary," answered Rupert imperiously, coming up to the fire. "You can't listen when you're playing with them chicken."^{*}

"Rupert, how can you speak to her in that way?" said Claudio, rousing himself as the little girl obediently carried out her pet.

"She's nothing but a girl, and women don't sinnify," answered Rupert, contemptuously.

Claude was silent as he skilfully built his pyramid of red embers one upon another. "You may measure the measure of your own manliness, Rupert, by the way you treat those who are weaker and younger than yourself. Do you understand that?" said he, presently.

"No," said Rupert, obstinately.

"Well, the sooner you do the better,—you'll come to it," observed Claude with a smile. "The more brutal and low a tribe of natives is, the worse they treat their women," he went on, almost to himself. He was so much alone that he often formalised his thoughts into words for his own satisfaction, even when they were beyond his auditors.

"You won't forget the story, Mr. Morris," said Mary, as she came in again. It was a puzzling request: he had exhausted his store of birds-and-beasts books, and was not much used to children, or to satisfying that insatiable appetite "which grows with that 'tis fed upon."

A man can only give of that which he has; and Claude, much put to it for matter, after ransacking his brains in vain, fell back upon his old classical recollections.

"There was once a great soldier called Ulysses, who lived far away in one of the Greek islands—we have been fighting a great battle not long ago to free the Greeks from the Turks."

"Mother calls me a terrible Turk when I'm naughty," soliloquized Mary in a low voice.

"It was very hot where he lived" ("Was he black?" said Rupert), "and he went with an army of his friends, and encamped in tents, to attack a town called Troy." ("Oh! Troy towns. I know what them is. Uncle Billy sailor used to draw them for we on the sand. They're a sort of maze, and when yer tread 'um, yer can't find yer way out easy," said Mary). "Well, poor Ulysses found the way home a sort of maze too, and very hard it was for him to find. It was ten years, however, before the Greeks could take the town, and then only by a kind of craft. But at last, when the work was done, Ulysses set off in his tiny ship rowed by men over the sea, and he went and he went and he went till he came to a land where the Cyclops lived: they were a sort of giant."

"I wonder were they as big as Jack's giant?" said Rupert.

"Or Giant Despair?" suggested Mary.

* Chicken is the plural of chick, and to say "chickens" is as bad grammar as "mama."

"Now the name of one of them was Polyphemus : he had but one eye like the rest, and he was very fond of men's flesh."

"Then he was an ogre," cried Mary, decisively, classifying his species and genus as a scientific observer ought to do. "Tom Thumb came to a whole family of 'um, yer know; but I think," she added, meditatively, "as they had a got both their eyes."

For this affluence of illustration Claude was hardly prepared, but he went on boldly with the "much-enduring," who had certainly never undergone such treatment before. Presently came the crisis.

"And Ulysses poked a burning stick into the giant's one eye."

And Mary clapped her hands, and Rupert almost shouted with delight.

"It was uncommon sharp on him," said he.

"Well, I can't help being sorry for Polyphemus," insinuated Claude ; "it was hard on him. 'No one' has done it, says the poor giant, vainly seeking redress. What business had Ulysses the astute on his shore ? It's just what civilized man has been doing ever since on all savage coasts,—usurping, annexing, ravaging, taking possession. I can't help having a great sympathy for the giants ; they're a simple, trusting, long-suffering race, and you children are deceived by appearance, and don't see that they're weak about the knees and about the head, and take up with these pestilent little fellows Jack and Tom Thumb, who overreach them as the saints did the devil in the middle ages, in the same pettifogging way."

The story was a great success ; but Claude found, to his amused surprise, that, stripped of the charm of the associations which only education can give, and of the beauty of the poetry and language, which nothing can replace, he could not raise the story much above the rank of Jack or any other giant-killer, or Sindbad or any other wandering mariner.

Education is no easy task. No one knows, till they have tried, the amount of indirect information which we all imbibe in the very air we live in, the chance talk of educated people. When all this has to be directly taught, when you must explain that Waterloo was a great battle between the French and English somewhere in Belgium, and who was Napoleon ; and that, when we talk of the Romans, we don't mean people who live at Rome, but the rulers over the known world of the time, the leeway to be made up is something most dispiriting. Rupert, however, naturally enough, did not regard his acquirements in this light, and Claude, coming in one afternoon unheard, found Mary standing by the table where the boy was sitting over his books.

"What a deal you do know, Ruby, now," said she, almost with a sigh.

"Yes," replied he ; "that's the forty-seventh prop. You don't know what that is ?"

"No," answered she, sadly.

"And now I've just finished 'English history,' and know all about

'the geography of the world,'" Rupert went on complacently, pointing to two little volumes beside him. He looked up suddenly, for he felt Claude's eye upon him, and blushed to the ears when he met his grave, almost contemptuous, smile.

"How can you be such an ass?" said he, as soon as the little girl was gone. "I'm sorry I ever taught you, Rupert, if that's the use you make of it, to go peacocking about in that way before a child. Know all English history! Why, it would take a wise man's whole life to understand the reign of Elizabeth. The geography of the world! Why, you're like the mite in a cheese, which thought that was the great globe itself!"

CHAPTER VIII.

A WOLF'S CUB.

"ISN'T Rupert at home, Cecily?" said Claude, looking in one evening to the large low old kitchen at Hawkshill, against whose great beams Rupert occasionally almost knocked his haughty head somewhat angrily. The place looked even more dreary, bare, and sad than when the old woman was alive. Cecily was sitting on a low chair by the chimney-corner, watching the boiling of the great copper of food for the pigs.

"How should I know where he is?" answered she, wearily, half rising, but scarcely turning round. "He's most like down at Old Moor. He don't bide much at home wi' we, an' he can help it. He's all'ays away now wi' some on ye," she added, with a sort of fierce sigh.

It is one of the most-pathetic sights in the world to see the longing for affection of very hard unsympathizing people, who are utterly powerless to win the love for which they crave sometimes with a sort of bitter passion.

Claude came up to the fire, and sat down silently by her: she hardly moved.

"Cecily, if your boy were without food, you'd go without sooner than he should want, I know," he said at last.

She looked up with a curious fire in her eyes, a far stronger assent than words.

"If he were thirsty, you wouldn't stint him with drink. He does hunger and thirst now, Cecily, and for what you can't give him. He wants to learn, he has a craving to know."

"What good 'ull that do him?" muttered she.

"We can't always see so far ahead," said Claude, gently, "as to tell what's good. You can't keep him from it any more than the hen who's hatched a duckling can hinder its swimming," said he, as in the intense quiet of the room the chickens walked in at the open back-door. "Don't grudge it him, Cecily. I believe he'll not care for you less in the long run; but even if he does, we must just do what is best of what we can, not what we wish. He didn't make himself, and we didn't make him. God

didn't put it into him for nothing, you may be very sure. We must learn to walk sometimes step by step by the light we have, not quite always seeing where it is leading." She did not answer, but sat on with her head in her hand, and Claude got up and went quietly away.

As he left the house he came upon Rupert himself, limping slowly up the hill, with a handkerchief round his head and covered with mud.

"What have ye done to yourself, boy?" said Claude, rather anxiously. He was always a little afraid of what mischief his wolf's cub might have been about.

"Grandad had a sent me to 'Dirty Denford,' and as I came home across the Seech there were one of they now-fangled thrashing-machines a-comin' along, and it frighted a little cart wi' a woman and a boy in it, close agin the heap o' stones where the Gipsy king's a buried and granny was found, and the horse cut away like anything across the road, and I just caught him; he dashed at me wi' his forelegs and hot me wi' his head a bit, but it ain't nothin' to speak on."

Claude turned back into the house with him. There was a deep wound in his head where the bit had hit him: his arm had been struck by the shaft, and his foot injured by the wheel.

"Why, ye look as if you'd been in the wars," said Claude, as he helped to bind up the cut and bathe the bruises for the unwilling boy, "and considering it was after all only for a woman!" laughed he. The boy rubbed his head against his shoulder like a dog, with a sort of rude affection that could not be put into words. He was not fit for work, however, with his hurts, for a week.

A few days after, while Claude was in the house, his grandfather came in, followed by the woman, who, in a vehement state of gratitude, had brought a sentimental offering of gooseberries.

"Eh, but us should ha' a' been knockt to bits if it hadn't been along o' he, and he were all among the nag's legs, so as my heart were like to ha' split up into my mouth," said she.

Rupert turned away with an impatient grunt.

"What does it mind saying aught about it? I'm glad I were there, and that's all as it is; there's nothing to talk so much like that," said he, as she went away rather mortified.

"You need not have been so ungracious, Rupert," said Claude, when they were alone again.

"What did that woman come palavering and bothering about?" answered he, fiercely. "I liked doin' of it, fightin' wi' the horse and mastering of him like that; it's pleasant, that is. When ye tell me mind and be softer to Mary and not answer my grandad back again, that's what's hard, and nobody thanks me for that," he added, with a half laugh.

"No," answered Claude, smiling, "nobody ever is thanked for the hardest things they have to do; they must do them straight on and not look for thanks. Old Mrs. Jared is sick; I am going to see her. Come with me, if it won't hurt your foot."

"Not that way," said Rupert, uneasily, as they turned towards the churchyard.

"Why not?" replied Claude, with a smile. They went on together in silence.

"Mr. Morris, ain't you ever fearful we may meet the ghost?" said the boy in a low voice, stopping short at last.

"I don't know about him," answered Claude, quietly. "Who is he?"

"There's a lot on 'um," replied Rupert, still lower, and with a shiver. "There's the ghost of old Master Bathe as frightened Harry Bates in the churchyard no longer nor December, and there's him as goes naked in the spinney, they say, a lookin' for his arm what he lost in the old war; and there's the bogget as wheels his head first, and then after that himself, down in a wheelbarrow into the pond." And he looked round shuddering, as if he thought the interesting gentleman in question might be just over his shoulder.

"What a clever fellow: I wonder how he does it! I should like to see him of all things. I'll go out with you anywhere any time of night you like, summer or winter, to look for him," laughed Claude. "We make ghosts of our own bad thoughts, and even our sad ones: we are haunted by our own past sometimes," he mused.

The boy was silent as they sauntered on. A couple of large white owls were flitting noiselessly across the avenue, carrying food to a nest of their young ones in a hollow tree, who hissed impatiently whenever there was a pause in their supper.

"What voracious little monsters, and swallowing all those live mice! Why haven't they as much right to live as the owlets? It's a frightfully difficult question—that preying on each other of the beasts," said Claude, watching them as he leant over a gate. Suddenly Rupert, who had not been listening, pressed closer to him, and said anxiously,—"I wonder when a chap have a' done summat wrong, but he didn't give it a thought, and it were most for fun, and it turned out all no end o' bad, how sorry he ought for to be?"

"Ah, the consequences of our actions! how far we are responsible for the widening circle on the water," said Claude—wandering off in his own thoughts, as so often happened—thinking aloud. "We should never act at all if we thought of it, the weight would be too crushing. But one cannot construct a formula which shall take in the whole question: the world is too wide. I suspect each case must be settled on its own merits. Is this a case of conscience, Rupert?" said he, smiling, as he remembered how far he had soared beyond his audience. "If you didn't mind giving me the facts we might try together for the interpretation."

"I set fire to the second stack in Farmer Bathe's yard," Rupert blurted out.

Claude gave a start.

"'Twere mostly for sport; the blaze were rare to look on; but they was bad folk was the farmer, and hard to the poor," Rupert went on, defensively.

"But even if he were, do you think it was your business to punish him? who art thou that judgest another?" said Claudio, musingly. "And what became of him? Wasn't that the poor fellow who died afterwards at Summerton? they said he caught cold and injured himself in putting out the fire. I remember he wasn't insured, and was heart-broken at his ruin, poor fellow. That was he."

"Yes," said Rupert, doggedly; "he cheated grandad at the fair, and riz the price of flour in the face of the bad times."

Claude saw that the bad side of the boy was uppermost: struggling only made it worse. He was absolutely silent, and in a few minutes he rose from his gate and walked away. The boy followed up to his side again uneasily.

"You're not going, sir?" said he.

"My dear Rupert," answered Claude, kindly, "what is the use of my staying? It only makes you defend your wrong to yourself. Your conscience is saying hard things to you, and you want to silence it by contradicting me. I believe I may safely leave you to it: it will sting you quite enough." The boy pressed after him, though he said nothing. Mr. Morris was beginning to be his conscience, and he suffered from his gentle censure more than from all the taunts and reproaches at Hawkshill, but he did not speak.

"Look, Rupert," said Claude, seriously, "I believe truly that you had no idea of what your deed would bring about; but probably the fire would have been put out but for your firing the second stack. The man's ruin is more or less at your door; you must bear the weight of it on your heart. It will do no good to any one now to give yourself up to the law—I don't even recommend it; but you are bound by every law, human and divine, to make what atonement you can here in this world. You can learn to rule yourself, to deny yourself; you shouldn't try and drown the recollection of it, or to make out to yourself that it wasn't a crime. And when temptation comes again, then remember what you once did, and seek strength to stand, my boy. You'll never do it alone, lad," he ended, affectionately, as he parted with him near the church. And Rupert, with his head down and his hands in his pockets, half defiant, half in thought, strolled silently home.

Claude was surprised himself at the hold on the lad which this confidence had given him. To acknowledge that you have been wrong, very wrong, sometimes is the greatest help to a fresh start,—repentance, not remorse; but it was up-hill work attempting to guide the boiling, seething life of the boy, untamed either by principle, or what so often stands in its place among the men to whom Claude was accustomed, a gentleman's code of honour; by which, after all, much more of the police of the world is really done for the upper classes than we sometimes care to remember.

The Earth u Magnet.

THERE is a very prevalent but erroneous opinion that the magnetic needle points to the north. We remember well how we discovered in our boyhood that the needle does *not* point to the north, for the discovery was impressed upon us in a very unpleasant manner. We had purchased a pocket compass, and were very anxious—not, indeed, to test the instrument, since we placed implicit reliance upon its indications—but to make use of it as a guide across unknown regions. Not many miles from where we lived lay Cobham Wood, no very extensive forest certainly, but large enough to lose oneself in. Thither, accordingly, we proceeded with three schoolfellows. When we had lost ourselves, we gleefully called the compass into action, and made from the wood in a direction which we supposed would lead us home. We travelled on with full confidence in our pocket guide; at each turning we consulted it in an artistic manner, carefully poising it and waiting till its vibrations ceased. But when we had travelled some two or three miles without seeing any house or road that we recognized, matters assumed a less cheerful aspect. We were unwilling to compromise our dignity as “explorers” by asking the way—a proceeding which no precedent in the history of our favourite travellers allowed us to think of. But evening came on, and with it a summer thunder-storm; we were getting thoroughly tired out, and the *jubilat olim meminisse* with which we had been comforting ourselves began to lose its force. When at length we yielded, we learned that we had gone many miles out of our road, and we did not reach home till several hours after dark. How it fared with our schoolfellows we know not, but a result overtook ourselves personally, for which there is no precedent, so far as we are aware, in the records of exploring expeditions. Also the offending compass was confiscated by justly indignant parents, so that for a long while the cause of our troubles was a mystery to us. We now know that instead of pointing due north the compass pointed more than 20° towards the west, or nearly to the quarter called by sailors north-north-west. No wonder, therefore, that we went astray when we followed a guide so untrustworthy.

The peculiarity that the magnetic needle does not, in general, point to the north, is the first of a series of peculiarities which we now propose briefly to describe. The irregularity is called by sailors the needle's *variation*, but the term more commonly used by scientific men is the *declination* of the needle. It was probably discovered a long time ago, for 800 years before our era the Chinese applied the magnet's directive force to guide them in journeying over the great Asiatic plains; and they must soon have detected so marked a peculiarity. Instead of a ship's

compass they made use of a magnetic car, on the front of which a floating needle carried a small figure whose outstretched arm pointed southwards. We have no record, however, of their discovery of the declination, and know only that they were acquainted with it in the twelfth century. The declination was discovered, independently, by European observers in the thirteenth century.

As we travel from place to place the declination of the needle is found to vary; Christopher Columbus was the first to detect this. He discovered it on the 18th of September, 1492, during his first voyage, and when he was six hundred miles from Ferro, the most westerly of the Canary Islands. He found that the declination, which was towards the east in Europe, passed to the west, and increased continually as he travelled westwards.

But here we see the first trace of a yet more singular peculiarity. We have said that at present the declination is towards the west in Europe. In Columbus' time it was towards the east. Thus we learn that the declination varies with the progress of time, as well as with change of place.

The Genius of modern science is a weighing and a measuring one. Men are not satisfied now-a-days with knowing that a peculiarity exists; they seek to determine its extent, how far it is variable—whether from time to time or from place to place, and so on. Now the results of such inquiries applied to the magnetic declination have proved exceedingly interesting.

We find first, that the world may be divided into two unequal portions, over one of which the needle has a westerly, and over the other an easterly, declination. Along the boundary line, of course, the needle points due north. England is situated in the region of westerly magnets. This region includes all Europe, except the north-eastern parts of Russia; Turkey, Arabia, and the whole of Africa; the greater part of the Indian Ocean, and the western parts of Australia; nearly the whole of the Atlantic Ocean; Greenland, the eastern parts of Canada, and a small slice from the north-eastern part of Brazil. All these form one region of westerly declination; but singularly enough, there lies in the very heart of the remaining and larger region of easterly magnets, an oval space of a contrary character. This space includes the Japanese Islands, Manchouria, and the eastern parts of China. It is very noteworthy also, that in the westerly region the declination is much greater than the easterly. Over the whole of Asia, for instance, the needle points almost due north. On the contrary, in the north of Greenland and of Baffin's Bay, the magnetic needle points due west, while still further to the north (a little westerly) we find the needle pointing with its north end directly towards the south.

In the presence of these peculiarities it would be pleasant to speculate. We might imagine the existence of powerfully magnetic veins in the earth's solid mass, coercing the magnetic needle from a full obedience to the true polar summons. Or the comparative effects of oceans and of continents might be called into play. But unfortunately for all this we have to

reconcile views founded on *fixed* relations presented by the earth, with the process of *change* indicated above. Let us consider the declination in England alone.

In the fifteenth century there was an easterly declination. This gradually diminished, so that in about the year 1657 the needle pointed due north. After this the needle pointed towards the west, and continually more and more, so that scientific men, having had experience only of a continual shifting of the needle in one direction, began to form the opinion that this change would continue, so that the needle would pass, through north-west and west, to the south. In fact, it was imagined that the motion of the needle would resemble that of the hands of a watch, only in a reversed direction. But before long observant men detected a gradual diminution in the needle's westerly motion. Arago, the distinguished French astronomer and physicist, was the first (we believe) to point out that "the progressive movement of the magnetic needle towards the west appeared to have become continually slower of late years" (he wrote in 1814), "which seemed to indicate that after some little time longer it might become retrograde." Three years later, namely on the 10th of February, 1817, Arago asserted definitively that the retrograde movement of the magnetic needle had commenced to be perceptible. Colonel Beaufoy at first opposed Arago's conclusion, for he found from observations made in London, during the years 1817-1819, that the westerly motion still continued. But he had omitted to take notice of one very simple fact, viz. that London and Paris are two different places. A few years later the retrograde motion became perceptible at London also, and it has now been established by the observations of forty years. It appears from a careful comparison of Beaufoy's observations that the needle reached the limit of its western digression (at Greenwich) in March, 1819, at which time the declination was very nearly 25° . In Paris, on the contrary, the needle had reached its greatest western digression (about $22\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$) in 1814. It is rather singular that although at Paris the retrograde motion thus presented itself five years earlier than in London, the needle pointed due north at Paris six years later than in London, viz., in 1668. Perhaps the greater amplitude of the needle's London digression, may explain this peculiarity.

"It was already sufficiently difficult," says Arago, "to imagine what could be the kind of change in the constitution of the globe, which could act during one hundred and fifty-three years, in gradually transferring the direction of the magnetic needle from due north to 23° west of north. We see that it is now necessary to explain, moreover, how it has happened that this gradual change has ceased, and has given place to a return towards the preceding state of the globe." "How is it," he pertinently asks, "that the directive action of the globe, which clearly must result from the action of molecules of which the globe is composed, can be thus variable, while the number, position, and temperature of these molecules, and, as far as we know, all their other physical properties, remain constant?"

But we have considered only a single region of the earth's surface. Arago's opinion will seem still more just when we examine the change which has taken place in what we may term the "magnetic aspect" of the whole globe. The line which separates the region of westerly magnets from the region of easterly magnets, now runs, as we have said, across Canada and eastern Brazil in one hemisphere, and across Russia, Asiatic Turkoy, the Indian Ocean, and West Australia in the other; besides having an outlying oval to the east of the Asiatic Continent. Now these lines have swept round a part of the globe's circuit in a most singular manner since 1600. They have varied alike in direction and complexity. The Siberian oval, now distinct, was, in 1787, merely a loop of the eastern line of no declination. The oval appears now to be continually diminishing, and will one day probably disappear.

We find here presented to us a phenomenon as mysterious, as astonishing, and as worthy of careful study as any embraced in the wide domains of science. But other peculiarities await our notice.

If a magnetic needle of suitable length be carefully poised on a fine point, or, better, be suspended from a silk thread without torsion, it will be found to exhibit each day two small but clearly perceptible oscillations. M. Arago, from a careful series of observations, deduced the following results:—

At about eleven at night, the north end of the needle begins to move from west to east, and having reached its greatest easterly excursion at about a quarter past eight in the morning, returns towards the west to attain its greatest westerly excursion at a quarter-past one. It then moves again to the east, and having reached its greatest easterly excursion at half-past eight in the evening, returns to the west, and attains its greatest westerly excursion at eleven, as at starting.

Of course, these excursions take place on either side of the mean position of the needle, and as the excursions are small, never exceeding the fifth part of a degree, while the mean position of the needle lies some 20° to the west of north, it is clear that the excursions are only nominally eastern and western, the needle pointing, throughout, far to the west.

Now if we remember that the north end of the needle is that farthest from the sun, it will be easy to trace in M. Arago's results a sort of effort on the part of the needle to turn towards the sun,—not merely when that luminary is above the horizon, but during his nocturnal path also.

We are prepared, therefore, to expect that a variation having an annual period shall appear, on a close observation of our suspended needle. Such a variation has been long since recognized. It is found that in the summer of both hemispheres, the daily variation is exaggerated, while in winter it is diminished.

But besides the divergence of a magnetized needle from the north pole, there is a divergence from the horizontal position, which must now claim our attention. If a non-magnetic needle be carefully suspended so as to rest horizontally, and be then magnetized, it will be found no longer to

preserve that position. The northern end *dips* very sensibly. This happens in our hemisphere. In the southern it is the southern end which dips. It is clear, therefore, that if we travel from one hemisphere to the other we must find the northern dip of the needle gradually diminishing till at some point near the equator the needle is horizontal, and as we pass thence to southern regions a gradually increasing southern inclination is presented. This has been found to be the case, and the position of the line along which there is no inclination (called the *magnetic equator*) has been traced around the globe. It is not coincident with the earth's equator, but crosses that circle at an angle of twelve degrees, passing from north to south of the equator in long. 8° west of Greenwich, and from south to north in long. 187° east of Greenwich. The form of the line is not exactly that of a great circle, but presents here and there (and especially where it crosses the Atlantic) perceptible excursions from such a figure.

At two points on the earth's globe the needle will rest in a vertical position. Those are the magnetic poles of the earth. The northern magnetic pole was reached by Sir J. G. Ross, and lies in 70° N. lat., and 263° E. long., that is, to the north of the American continent, and not very far from Boothia Gulf. One of the objects with which Ross set out on his celebrated expedition to the Antarctic Seas was the discovery if possible of the southern magnetic pole. In this he was not successful. Twice he was in hopes of attaining his object, but each time he was stopped by a barrier of land. He approached so near, however, to the pole, that the needle was inclined at an angle of nearly ninety degrees to the horizon, and he was able to assign to the southern pole a position in 75° S. lat., 154° E. long. It is not probable, we should imagine, that either pole is fixed, since we shall now see that the inclination, like the declination of the magnetic needle, is variable from time to time, as well as from place to place; and in particular, the magnetic equator is apparently subjected to a slow but uniform process of change.

Arago tells us that the inclination of the needle at Paris has been observed to diminish year by year since 1671. At that time the inclination was no less than 75° ; in other words, the needle was inclined only 15° to the vertical. In 1791 the inclination was less than 71° . In 1831 it was less than 68° . In like manner the inclination at London has been observed to diminish, from 72° in 1786 to 70° in 1804, and thence to 68° at the present time.

It might be anticipated from such changes as these that the position of the magnetic equator would be found to be changing. Nay, we can even guess in which way it must be changing. For, since the inclination is diminishing at London and Paris, the magnetic equator must be approaching these places, and this (in the present position of the curve) can only happen by a gradual shifting of the magnetic equator from east to west along the true equator. This motion has been found to be really taking place. It is supposed that the movement is accompanied by a change of

form ; but more observations are necessary to establish this interesting point.

Can it be doubted that while these changes are taking place, the magnetic poles also are slowly shifting round the true pole ? Must not the northern pole, for instance, be further from Paris now than the needle is inclined more than 28° from the vertical, than in 1671, when the inclination was only 15° . It appears obvious that this must be so, and we deduce the interesting conclusion that each of the magnetic poles is rotating around the earth's axis.

But there is another peculiarity about the needle which is as noteworthy as any of those we have spoken about. We refer to the intensity of the magnetic action, the energy with which the needle seeks its position of rest. This is not only variable from place to place, but from time to time, and is further subject to sudden changes of a very singular character.

It might be expected that where the dip is greater, the directive energy of the magnet would be proportionably great. And this is found to be approximately the case. Accordingly the magnetic equator is very nearly coincident with the "equator of least intensity," but not exactly. As we approach the magnetic poles we find a more considerable divergence, so that instead of there being a northern pole of greatest intensity nearly coincident with the northern magnetic pole, which we have seen lies to the north of the American continent, there are two northern poles, one in Siberia nearly at the point where the river Lena crosses the Arctic circle, the other not so far to the north—only a few degrees north, in fact, of Lake Superior. In the south, in like manner, there are also two poles, one on the Antarctic circle about 180° E. long. in Adelie Island, the other not yet precisely determined, but supposed to lie on about the 240° th degree of longitude, and south of the Antarctic circle. Singularly enough there is a line of lower intensity running right round the earth along the valleys of the two great oceans, "passing through Behring's Straits and bisecting the Pacific on one side of the globe, and passing out of the Arctic Sea by Spitzbergen and down the Atlantic on the other."

Colonel Sabine discovered that the intensity of the magnetic action varies during the course of the year. It is greatest in December and January in both hemispheres. If the intensity had been greatest in winter one would have been disposed to have assigned seasonal variation of temperature as the cause of the change. But as the epoch is the same for both hemispheres we must seek another cause. Is there any astronomical element which seems to correspond with the law discovered by Sabine ? There is one very important element. The position of the perihelion of the earth's orbit is such that the earth is nearest to the sun on about the 31st of December or the 1st of January. There seems nothing rashly speculative, then, in concluding that the sun exercises a magnetic influence on the earth, varying according to the distance of the earth from the sun. Nay, Sabine's results seem to point very distinctly to the law of variation. For, although the number of observations is not as yet very great, and the

extreme delicacy of the variation renders the determination of its amount very difficult, enough has been done to show that in all probability the sun's influence varies according to the same law as gravity—that is, inversely as the square of the distance.

That the sun, the source of light and heat, and the great gravitating centre of the solar system, should exercise a magnetic influence upon the earth, and that this influence should vary according to the same law as gravity, or as the distribution of light and heat, will not appear perhaps very surprising. But the discovery by Sabine that *the moon* exercises a distinctly traceable effect upon the magnetic needle seems to us a very remarkable one. We receive very little light from the moon, much less (in comparison with the sun's light) than most persons would suppose, and we get absolutely no perceptible heat from her. Therefore it would seem rather to the influence of mass and proximity that the magnetic disturbances caused by the moon must be ascribed. But if the moon exercises an influence in this way, why should not the planets? We shall see that there is evidence of some such influence being exerted by these bodies.

More mysterious if possible than any of the facts we have discussed is the phenomenon of *magnetic storms*. The needle has been exhibiting for several weeks the most perfect uniformity of oscillation. Day after day the careful microscopic observation of the needle's progress, has revealed a steady swaying to and fro, such as may be seen in the masts of a stately ship at anchor on the scarce-heaving breast of ocean. Suddenly a change is noted; irregular jerking movements are perceptible, totally distinct from the regular periodic oscillations. A magnetic storm is in progress. But where is the centre of disturbance, and what are the limits of the storm? The answer is remarkable. If the jerking movements observed in places spread over very large regions of the earth—and in some well-authenticated cases over the whole earth—be compared with the local time, it is found that (allowance being made for difference of longitude) *they occur precisely at the same instant*. The magnetic vibrations thrill in one moment through the whole frame of our earth!

But a very singular circumstance is observed to characterize those magnetic storms. They are nearly always observed to be accompanied by the exhibition of the aurora in high latitudes, northern and southern. Probably they never happen without such a display; but numbers of auroras escape our notice. The converse proposition, however, *has* been established as an universal one. No great display of the aurora ever occurs without a strongly marked magnetic storm.

Magnetic storms sometimes last for several hours or even days.

Remembering the influence which the sun has been found to exercise upon the magnetic needle, the question will naturally arise, has the sun anything to do with magnetic storms? We have clear evidence that he has.

On the 1st of September, 1859, Messrs. Carrington and Hodgson were observing the sun, one at Oxford and the other in London. Their scrutiny

was directed to certain large spots which, at that time, marked the sun's face. Suddenly, a bright light was seen by each observer to break out on the sun's surface and to travel, slowly in appearance, but in reality at the rate of about 7,000 miles in a minute, across a part of the solar disc. Now it was found afterwards that the self-registering magnetic instruments at Kew had made at that very instant a strongly marked jerk. It was learned that at that moment a magnetic storm prevailed at the West Indies, in South America, and in Australia. The signalmen in the telegraph stations at Washington and Philadelphia received strong electric shocks; the pen of Bain's telegraph was followed by a flame of fire; and in Norway the telegraphic machinery was set on fire. At night great auroras were seen in both hemispheres. It is impossible not to connect these startling magnetic indications with the remarkable appearance observed upon the sun's disc.

But there is other evidence. Magnetic storms prevail more commonly in some years than in others. In those years in which they prevail most frequently, it is found that the ordinary oscillations of the magnetic needle are more extensive than usual. Now when these peculiarities had been noticed for many years, it was found that there was an alternate and systematic increase and diminution in the intensity of magnetic action, and that the period of the variation was about eleven years. But at the same time a diligent observer had been recording the appearance of the sun's face from day to day and from year to year. He had found that the solar spots are in some years more freely displayed than in others. And he had determined the period in which the spots are successively presented with maximum frequency to be about eleven years. On a comparison of the two sets of observations it was found (and has now been placed beyond a doubt by many years of continued observation) that magnetic perturbations are most energetic when the sun is most spotted, and *vice versa*.

For so remarkable a phenomenon as this none but a cosmical cause can suffice. We can neither say that the spots cause the magnetic storms nor that the magnetic storms cause the spots. We must seek for a cause producing at once both sets of phenomena. There is as yet no certainty in this matter, but it seems as if philosophers would soon be able to trace in the disturbing action of the planets upon the solar atmosphere the cause as well of the marked period of eleven years as of other less distinctly marked periods which a diligent observation of solar phenomena is beginning to educe.

A City of Refuge.

To be well, to be ill, to be sad, to be cross ; to feel jars that shake, pains that tear and burn, and weary nerves that shrink and flutter, or that respond so strangely and dully to the will that it seems almost as if we were scarcely ourselves, at times, when, longing to feel and to sympathize with the emotion of others, we are only conscious of a numb cold acquiescence in their gladness or pain : all this is in the experience of us all, of the most happy as well as of the least happy alike, of the softest and hardest hearted. Only with some it is the experience of an instant and with others of a lifetime.

The range of this mysterious gamut teaches us, perhaps, something of the secret of what others are feeling ; and in the same way that the sick and unhappy may imagine what vigour, hope, love, the fervour of life and youth mean, to some, by its help, the fortunate may guess now and then at the sorrows of years, understand the hopelessness, the patience, the disappointment of a lifetime—guess at it for an instant as they stand by a sick-bed or see the poor wayfarer lying by their path. There is a group I have now in my mind that many of us may have noticed of late—some tired people resting on the road-side, a sunset marsh beyond ; they have lighted a fire of which the smoke is drifting in the still air, and the tired eye looks out at the spectator and beyond him in the unconscious simplicity of suffering. We all understand it, though we have perhaps never in all our lives rested for the night, wearied, by a ditch-side. It is so true to life that we who are alive instinctively recognize its truth and uncomplaining complaint.

The persons of whom I am going to write just now, are mostwise in these sadder secrets of life, which they have learnt by long years of apprenticeship. Poor souls ! We have all come across them at one time or another. Sometimes we listen to their complaint, sometimes we don't ; sometimes we put out a helping hand to pull them along, sometimes we get weary, and let them go. It would almost seem as if the range of the pity that we feel for others, for the same troubles at different times, were as wide and as changeful as the very experience from which sympathies most often spring. But although it is easy enough to help our brothers and sisters seven times—more easy than to forgive them, it is difficult enough for us individually to help them seventy times seven times, and in this must lie the great superiority of institutions over individual effort, of whom the kindness is left to chance and to good-natured impulse, instead of being part of a rule that works on in all tempers and at all times.

It seemed to me the other day that it was real help that was being given to some afflicted persons whom I was taken to see, at the Incurable

Hospital on Putney Common, a few of the afflicted out of all those that are stricken and in trouble, and in numbers so great that, for the most part, we might pass on in despair if it were not for the good hope of present and future help such places afford.

We crossed Putney Bridge one bright spring day and drove up through the quaint old Putney High Street. The lilacs were beginning to flower in the gardens and behind the mossy old walls. When we had climbed the hill we came out upon a great yellow gorsy common, where all the air was sweet with the peach scent of the blossom. Its lovely yellow flame was bursting from one bush and from another, and blazing against the dull purple green of the furze. We had not very far to go. The carriage turned down a green lane, of which the trees and hedges did not hide glimpses of other lights and other blossoming commons in the distance ; and when we stopped it was at a white lodge, of which the gate was hospitably open, and from whence a shady green sweep led us to a noble and stately house, which was once Melrose Hall, but which is now the Hospital for Incurables.

A little phalanx of bath chairs was drawn up round the entrance, and in each a patient was sitting basking in this first pleasant shining of summer sun. The birds were chirping in the tall trees overhead, the little winds were puffing in our faces, and those of the worn, wan, tired creatures, who had been dragged out to benefit by the comforting freshness of the day. Some of them looked up—not all—as we drove to the door.

M. sent a small boy with a card to ask for admission for some friends of Mr. H.'s, and we waited for a few minutes until the answer came. All the time that we were waiting, an eager, afflicted young fellow was trying hard to make himself intelligible to the sick man in the bath chair next to his own. The poor boy could only make anxious uncouth sounds ; the sick man to whom he was speaking listened for a while, and then shook his head and turned wearily away. So it wasn't all sunshine even in the sunshine in the lovely tree-shaded garden, with the chirruping birds and lilac buds coming out. There were some attendants coming and going from chair to chair. There were other little carriages slowly progressing along the distant winding paths of the garden, and presently the message came that we might be admitted. The matron was away, but the head nurse said she would show us over the place ; and she led the way across the vestibule with its pretty classical ornamentation, opening the tall doors and bringing us into the stately rooms where a different company had once assembled, and yet it was not so very different after all, for pain and ill health are no excessive respecters of persons. The Duke of Argyll, who was chairman at the last anniversary dinner, spoke of some of the persons who used to meet in these very rooms once upon a time, before they were turned to their present uses : among the rest Sir Walter Scott and Lockhart, and Sir Humphry Davy. I could almost fancy the kind and familiar face of Sir Walter looking on with gentle interest and compassion at the pathetic company which is now waiting in the big drawing-room of Melrose Hall, with the stately terrace and lofty windows that let in

the light so bountifully—lame, blind, halt and maimed, from London highways and the distant country byways. They sit in groups round the tables and windows, busy, somewhat silent. At the end of the room there is a golden-piped organ, the gift of the treasurer. A governess, who is one of the patients, often plays to the others upon it, and so do the ladies who visit the place. Once when I was there some one opened the instrument and began to play. As the music filled the room we all listened, beating a sort of time together. It seemed like a promise of better things to those who were listening, for themselves and for others. This sitting-room is a lofty, stately place, as I have said, with columns and mouldings. All about there are comfortable chairs and tables, and spring sofas for aching spines that cannot sit upright, tables for work over which all these patient creatures are bending. They have still tranquil faces for the most part, quiet and pale, and resting for a time in the refuge into which they have escaped out of the weary struggle and crowd of life. The privilege is sad enough, heaven knows, and the price they have paid for it is a heavy one.

The head nurse went from one to another, and the faces all seemed to light up to meet hers. It is a very simple and infallible sign of love and of confidence. "It would not do for me to pity them too much," the kind nurse said; "I always try to speak cheerfully to them." We who only come to look on may pity and utter the commonplaces of compassion and curiosity. How tired the poor things must be of the stupid reiteration of adjectives and exclamations. There was one old woman, so nice and with such sweet eyes, that I could not help sitting down by her and saying some one of those platitudes that one has recourse to. She didn't answer, but only looked at me with an odd long look.

"She cannot speak," the nurse whispered, beckoning me away.

A few of the patients were reading, but only a few. *Good Words* seemed to be popular, and the story in it is particularly liked, they told me. Some of the patients do plain work, and as I was speaking to one of them the door opened, and a good-natured looking man came in.

"Any of the ladies like to go out for a drive to-day?" he said, in a brisk business-like tone.

Two or three voices answered, "Only Miss —," and then Miss — began beckoning and waving her hand from the other end of the room, and was rolled off accordingly for her drive in the garden-chair.

It was not my first visit to the hospital; but though a year had passed, there were many of the faces as I remembered them, sitting in the same corners, stitching and hooking, blind women knitting, the clever, patient fingers weaving an interest into their lives with threads of cotton and wool; one gentle-looking old lady, in a frill cap, was working a pair of slippers, dull red with bright green spots. She had but two fingers to work with, and only, I think, this one painful crippled hand; but she was working away on a frame to which her canvas was fixed.

"I cannot like your colours this time, Mrs. —," the nurse said; "your last slippers were so pretty, and your work is so beautiful, that it is quite a pity you should not have pretty-coloured wools to set it off."

The old lady shook her head ; she wouldn't be convinced. "These are lovely wools, my dear," she said. "I shall certainly go on with them. It's all your want of taste, that is what I think." And she nodded her head, and laughed and stitched on with fresh interest.

As we went upstairs we were shown lifts and pulleys and all sorts of comfortable appliances for the use of the patients. I could not help admiring the extreme order and neatness of all the arrangements, and the freshness and ventilation of all the places we went into.

In one of the rooms upstairs a funny old fellow, in a tall night-cap, was stitching away at his torn shirt-sleeves. He was sitting quite by himself in a big ward, with many empty beds in it. He laughed when he saw us, winked, waved his night-cap with an air, and then informed us he was the oldest patient, and was doing a bit of work ; he didn't like to trust his shirt to others—not he—he was a poor old bachelor, he had to sew his own buttons on—and he was then very mysterious and confidential about a shirt which had been lost at the wash a year ago. Dark suspicions evidently were still haunting him on the subject, but he cheered up, winked, laughed, waved his night-cap again to us when we went away out of the room. "She is my greatest joy and comfort," he said, with a bow to the nurse, who could not help laughing. The men have much more courage than the women, they keep about until the last, this lady told us ; women would be in bed and refuse to get up, when the men crawl downstairs day after day, and insist upon making the effort.

And yet in the men's sitting-room there is a much sadder, duller, and more helpless community than in the women's. The numbers are fewer, and in most cases the brain seems more hopelessly affected. One boy was making paper fly-catchers, but I don't think any of the others were doing anything. I have a vision of an old man sitting at a table, while we were there, trying to take up a broken piece of bread. His hand passed beyond it again and again ; it was by a sort of chance that he feebly clutched it at last and carried it to his mouth.

It didn't seem much to be able to walk away, to look back, to remember what we had seen ; and yet how is it that we are not on our knees in gratitude and thankfulness for every active motion of the body, every word we speak, every intelligent experience and interest that passes through our minds ?

There was a great scampering of children's feet in one of the passages as we came up the wooden stairs, and some bright eyes peeped at us, and three little girls in the short kilts and plaid ribbons of middle-class London retreated into a room of which the door was wide open, and fled to a bedside, where they all stood shyly in a row until we could come up. Our guide led the way and we followed her in, and there from the bed a pair of big bright brown eyes, not unlike the children's, were turned upon us, and a handsome young girl, lying flat on her back, greeted us with a good-humoured smile. "Aunt Mary" the children called her. Big and handsome and strong though she looked, this poor bright-looking Aunt Mary, she was completely paralyzed as far as the head ;

she could not move hand or foot ; it was a dead body with this bright bonny living face to it. She did not look more than six or seven and twenty ; she had nice thick brown hair and even white teeth. With these this brave girl had imagined for herself that with practice she should be able to hold a pencil and guide it, tracing the words against a little desk that was so contrived as to swing across her bed when wanted. She was perfectly enchanted with the contrivance, and said it was the greatest delight to her to be able to write for herself. The doctor, she told me, not without pride, had been quite surprised to receive a letter from her one day, and could not imagine how she had written it for herself.

Leaving her we crossed a passage and came to a room not far off, where two women were lying : one of them had got something in her bed that she was caressing and talking to in a plaintive pitying voice, patting as if it was some animal or living thing. M., wondering what it could be, went up to see ; she found that it was a watch of which the glass was broken. In the other bed a gentle-faced very old woman was lying, afflicted with palsy. Her poor body shook and trembled painfully as I stood beside the bed, and her hands, in attempting to meet, crossed and passed each other again and again. I said to her that I could not think how she bore her affliction so patiently, for the head nurse had told me that her sweetness was quite touching, she never complained, never said an impatient word.

"When I am not well," I said, "I grumble and complain to everybody, even for little trifling ailments. You make me feel ashamed."

"Ah," the old woman answered gently, "'tis good to be still."

She said it so simply and quietly that it came home to me then and there, the gentle remonstrance coming from the weary bed where so many long hopeless hours had passed for her, where she lay patiently enduring while we walked away. The other woman was still talking to her watch, and did not notice us as we passed.

The room, which was formerly the library, makes a delightful room for one or two of the patients. It has tall windows, opening upon a broad terraco-like balcony, and beyond are the same elm-trees and glimpses of sky and common that we see from the big room down below. There is one great sufferer here who does not often get down. She cannot sit up, from spine disease, and when I saw her last she was lying by the window, with a face wrapped in cotton wool, poor soul, for she had been suffering tortures from neuralgia ; and though the dentist had come and taken out two of her teeth, she was still in pain. The head nurse pitied her, and recommended a little blister to draw away the inflammation. The patient shrunk and laughed and shook her head. She couldn't bear any more pain, she whispered imploringly ; she wanted so to get down for a change. A little belladonna plaster where nobody would see it, under her cap, so that it shouldn't show and look ugly, and where nobody would see it, please. There were two good-sized baskets standing on a table near this patient. They were literally piled and packed with tracts. "We get a great many," she said, seeing me look at them ; "more than we can read." Poor soul ! I hope her belladonna plaster has done her good. As we

came away, the nurse stopped for a moment to speak to quite an elegant old lady, who was sitting up, extremely nicely dressed, in a chair, with a grand cap and ribbons, and a knitted lace shawl.

It was getting late, and we began to pass blue-garbed under-nurses carrying little trays with teas. The patients who are well enough to get down have their meals in the big dining-room ; but these little trays looked very nice and appetising ; the whole order of the place is perfectly appointed. Some of the rooms upstairs were like little bowers, with pots flowering round the windows, bird-cages hanging up, pictures on the walls of the friends of the sick people. One pale face looked at us as we passed a white bed. Her room was like a little chapel, with light streaming in from through the flowers and bird-cages and the climbing greens upon the casement, and the poor martyr, alas ! lying on her rack.

There was another pale face that looked out, too, as we passed ; but as we were going in the nurse stopped us, and said she feared the patient was dying ; and so we moved away. I asked to be taken to a sick woman I remembered a year before a kind, merry person, who had gone through a terrible operation. She was in bed still in the same room, still looking the same, bright, friendly, with smart little curls, and a friend gossiping by her bedside.

To see such a place as this as it is, to be sorry enough and tender enough to continue to sympathize with all its suffering, would need, I think, a mind scarcely human in its powers. The whole subject is so vast, so mysterious, and utterly beyond our comprehension, that it is easier to dwell upon the comforting kindness, the helps to endurance and courage, that are to be found here more than in any place I ever saw. There was one poor girl who had been lying for seven years upon her side. All the lines of those seven years seemed to me in her white wan face. She did not complain, though her eyes complained for her ; but she said she had a nice water bed—that was a great comfort ; and her cup of milk and toast for tea were beside her, so nicely served and prepared that it was a pleasure to see the little meal : and there was a great bunch of spring lilac buds in a glass, that another patient had brought to her out of the garden—the first of the year.

Upstairs, higher still, there is a room which is not generally shown, where a strange weird party of poor little deformities are assembled. Little women with huge heads, so sad, so grotesque, and horrible, that one's very pity is scarcely pity, but wonder. They were sitting round a little tea-table, which they were preparing for themselves ; one of them was boiling the kettle. They seemed quite happy and busy. It was like some pantomime of nature ; like some strange people out of another planet, sitting together and staring at us with those huge weird-like faces, supported by living bodies. And yet with all its endless combination of pain and of sorrow this hospital does not send us away sad and rebellious at heart, as do many refuges for sorrow and trouble : for instance, a work-house ward, where there are cases often enough that might be admitted here if there was room for them ; or a sick close room, in a narrow street,

where the healthy and unhealthy are shut up together for days and for nights. Here where there is such great suffering, there is also great comfort and tender nursing and companionship ; there are trees, and grasses, and sweet lilac, and gorse-blown winds, close at hand. There is a certain liberality in all the arranging and economy of the place, that seems to disprove the practical notion of Charity being a grinding, snubbing sort of personage, who would like to get the scales into her own hand if she could, and to weigh out her kindnesses by the ounce. Such a plan as this would defeat its own object if the inmates were not well and generously tended. Perhaps I should in fairness confess to having heard of the bitter complaints of one of the patients, who had a fancy for lobsters every day, and who was denied this delicacy ; but she is not the first to long for the unattainable, and certainly, to some of us, grumbling is almost as great a privilege as eating lobsters every day.

It seems fitting and seemly that in a great country like ours there should be munificent charities, comforting and liberal in their dealings ; one only longs that their doors should be set open more widely, if possible, to the crowds that are waiting about them for admission. Here is a paper before me, it is two years old, and I know not how many have succeeded in their efforts ; but looking at it, it would indeed appear as if the wayfarers were lying all along the road, and the Samaritan passing by has only one ass to carry them away upon.

These biographies are not very long in writing, and I may quote one or two that I have copied off the list :—

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| Paralysis, loss of speech | Captain of a Steam-vessel. |
| Disease of the Brain and Debility..... | Governess. |
| Disease of the Spine and Joints, Paralysis | Governess. |
| Paralysis | Captain of a Mail Steamer. |
| Disease of Spine and Throat | Schoolmistress. |
| Injury to Spine..... | Working Engineer. |
| Paralysis and Asthma | Master Tailor. |

These are seven out of a 100—a whole sad life of labour and suffering told in a few words. There are laundry-women, servants, journeymen, dressmakers. It is a comfort to turn back to those who are safely within reach of kind hands, helpful appliances, and friendly words such as those which I heard the head-nurse speaking to her patients, as I followed her about from one room to another.

It has been proposed lately to establish a hospital on somewhat similar principles for children, with this one comforting proviso that the children are to be cured if possible. A doctor of very great experience and reputation, who once superintended a children's hospital in Paris, and for whose opinion his friends have a great and just regard, was speaking on the subject to a friend, and saying that there are many chronic cases in childhood deemed incurable, which are in reality perfectly curable, but which require a doctoring of fresh air, of regular diet, of cleanliness, &c., that it is impossible they should receive at home. I believe it was in

this way the idea originated, and now the hospital really seems in a fair way to being established. Four or five people have each promised a hundred a year towards it, of their own accord, without solicitation. When a thousand a year is assured the hospital will be begun. A big garden is the first thing wanted, for the children to play in and to exercise their limbs. The children's hospitals, admirable as they are, cannot keep the little things always, and are obliged to change their patients constantly. Anybody who has seen the piteous crowd waiting at the doors in Great Ormond Street will understand the necessity there is for more and more such help and assistance to the good work which is done there.

Only yesterday there was a little patient who had been discharged almost cured from what seemed a hopeless and chronic illness, after only two months of care in the children's hospital, who was begging and praying to go back from his home in the back kitchen with the mangle. One patient! A hundred—a thousand, to-morrow, if one searched for them, and knew what to do with them when one had found them or where to send them. This incurable children's hospital has, however, good friends among people who love their own children, and who are willing to come forward with generous hearts and great sums to assist it, and there is great hope of its speedy establishment.

But one of the greatest difficulties that have to be contended against at present in the management of anything of the sort, is the extraordinary system which has grown up all about us, and which seems to be almost impossible to contend with.

I have the reports before me now of two hospitals, conducted by different people, each doing a great and important work. How much the help might be extended if the machinery were more simple and the manner of administering aid less complicated and costly, it would be hard to say. A great country like ours should have noble charities; niggardliness seems to me a far more deprecable fault than excess of generosity in the help afforded. But what people complain of, and with reason, I think, is that part of the money they subscribe, instead of going to the objects of their charity, the attendance, the food, the comfort of the patients, is by the mere fashion and necessity of the day put to strange and vexing purposes—to printing little books that nobody reads, to sending circulars that go straight into the fire, to arranging an elaborate machinery of admission that in no way benefits the patients. The postage and advertising and printing of two hospitals comes to 1,800*l.* in the course of a year; of which 100*l.* a year for the postage of each hospital represents something like, say, 240,000 letters. I don't know how many hard days' work 240,000 letters would mean, and how many of them are mere circulars, or how many might be spared; but it seems as if so much of our energy went into advertising and crying our good intentions that, in time, there will be no strength or time left for anything else.

An experiment has been partially tried at an institution where no canvassing is allowed, and no public election. The votes—so a friend to whom

I had spoken on the subject writes—are quietly “counted at the office, and the results announced.” He, however, goes on to say that this plan is not successful in a pecuniary point of view; and a charity in which all the power was vested in a committee would have still less chance of success. I had spoken to him on the subject of this incurable hospital, and asked why the most pressing cases were not elected by a competent board instead of those people having the best chance who had most friends, and whose friends were most active in their behalf. “ You do not know,” he said, “ all the outcry and discontent that such a proceeding would give rise to. We should be accused of unfairness, of partiality. We ourselves dislike the system as much as you do, but we cannot help ourselves; we are obliged to give in to the common cry and common weakness of human nature, and to take the good and the bad as they come together.” And so it is, and we must be content to accept things as they are, but with the bad and the good there is certainly given to each one of us an instinct for better things, and is it quite impossible that any effort should ever be made to disembarrass good and noble things from the cumber of selfish interest patronage which weight them so heavily? Is there no divine indignation left among us strong enough to overturn the tables of the money-changers, to chase away those that sell doves in the temple.

What a horrible complication it seems looking at it honestly with unbiassed eyes! Is it possible that we are sunk so low, that we can not give freely and with generous, tender, and grateful hearts, without this hideous system of patronage, of rules, of complimentary chapping, of bad dinners and wines, of subscription lists and names affixed to little miserable scraps of crumbs from our table that should make us ashamed instead of complacent, as we turn to B or A or whatever our initial may be, and see our honest name set down with a shabby price to it like the cheap rubbish in a huxter’s shop.

I think Mr. Froude, in his essay on *Representative Men*, has put words to a difficulty which a great many have felt but which few people have put words to before. It is a difficulty of words in itself: and concerns the constant cry of the age, the advice of the preacher, which comes to us from every side calling and urging us to be good, and bidding us be noble, crying that to us is entrusted a mission of love and of charity. “ Go forth,” so they say, “ Go forth and fulfil it.” And then the difficulty occurs to some of us, where are we to go forth? how are we to be good? when are we to be noble? Passive charity is useless without a practical use for it, and so the teachers acknowledge. But have you no neighbours to tend? they cry, no sufferers to comfort by the way? Are there no wayfarers who have fallen by the roadside? And all this is true enough,—too true, alas!—for the wounded wayfarers may be counted by thousands.

And yet as I write I feel that the preacher is right in the main, though his talk is satire, and he has not sufficiently applied the science of the truth he instinctively feels to the daily facts of life. Life, I suppose, must

for most of us be a rule of thumb—if I may be allowed so to speak ; and to go forth must mean to take a cab and call upon a dull friend, or to protest, when we see occasion, against wrong-doing of any sort, or to take trouble about things that do not interest or concern us very much. There are some noble and honest natures to whom instinctively the impulse comes for action, and for right and great action too,—some lives whose love and example are benedictions to those who are about them,—one noble tender heart leavening the dough by its unconscious generous tenderness and example. These people need ask no questions, for theirs are the voices that answer, not in preaching, but by their simplicess, their truth, their tender impulse. As a rule we who ask are not the people who work and achieve.

A woman died not long ago who had lived some twenty-six or twenty-seven years one of those lives that do not question for themselves, but that seem like answers to the vague aspirations of others. I do not know if I may write her name, but those who have loved this lady will know how it is that I quote her as one of the examples of this bright and resolute devotion, that shines like a beacon in the storm to those who are wandering about in search of a way. She was the head nurse of the hospital at Lincoln, where in time a terrible mortality and illness overtaxed her strength, and her strength of life being gone, she died. And as I write these words, there comes the news of the passing away of a man whose kindness and true Christian strength of heart and of mind, spoke better than any words what a life can be—a blessing, a kindness, a help in trouble, to all those who have lived round about it.

I have drifted away from the incurables a little ; any one who likes to go and see the place is welcome, and no one can go without coming away touched and humbled, and perhaps a little the better for the visit.

The privilege is a sad one, heaven knows, that belongs to all these poor people ; but sad as it is, when one looks at these gentle and tranquil faces, it is hard to think of those still outside, in a world that looks peaceful enough, and pleasant and green to-day from these open windows, but which is a weary, illimitable place for those who, with paralysed limbs and racked bodies, are hopelessly and helplessly trying to escape from the overwhelming tramp of the legions by which they are overwhelmed : legions that advance upon them as one has sometimes dreamt in dreams, by every road, by every turn of life. I can imagine poor wearied, hunted souls trying to fly from want, from anguish, from loneliness, from neglect and cruel words, but their limbs will not carry them ; they cannot work, they are too weak even to beg, friends weary, subsistence fails, their own hearts fail. The Duke of Argyll says that nearly 6,000 people annually leave the London hospitals suffering from incurable disease. Of these how many must there be in miserable condition. One's own heart might indeed fail at the thought of such tremendous calamity ; but for 6,000 incurables, how many hundreds of thousands are there not among us who are well and strong, and who have enough to live and enough to give to others, and asses and pennies to spare for others in their need ?

Anarchy and Authority.

(CONTINUED.)

I COME now to the last of those obstacles which our national character and habits seem to oppose to the extrication and elevation of that best self, or paramount right reason, which we have been led to look for as our true guardian against anarchy, and only sound centre of authority at the present time. This last, and perhaps greatest, obstacle is our preference of doing to thinking. Now this preference goes very deep, and as we study it we find ourselves opening up a number of large questions on every side.

Let me go back for a moment to what I have already quoted from Bishop Wilson :—"First, never go against the best light you have ; secondly, take care that your light be not darkness." I said we show, as a nation, laudable energy and persistence in walking according to the best light we have, but are not quite careful enough, perhaps, to see that our light be not darkness. This is only another version of the old story that energy is our strong point and favourable characteristic, rather than intelligence. But we may give to this idea a more general form still, in which it will have a yet larger range of application. We may regard this energy driving at practice, this paramount sense of the obligation of duty, self-control, and work, this earnestness in going manfully with the best light we have, as one force ; and this intelligence driving at the ideas which are, after all, the basis of right practice, this ardent sense for all the new and changing combinations of them which man's development brings with it, this indomitable impulse to know and adjust them perfectly, as another force. And these two forces we may regard as in some sense rivals—rivals not by the necessity of their own nature, but as exhibited in man and his history—and rivals dividing the empire of the world between them. And to give these forces names from the two races of men who have supplied the most signal and splendid manifestations of them, we may call them respectively the forces of Hebraism and Hellenism. Hebraism and Hellenism—between these two points of influence moves our world. At one time it feels more powerfully the attraction of one of them, at another time of the other ; and it ought to be, though it never is, evenly and happily balanced between them.

The final aim of both Hellenism and Hebraism, as of all great spiritual disciplines, is no doubt the same : man's perfection or salvation. The very language which they both of them use in schooling us to reach this

aim is often identical. Even when their language indicates by variation—sometimes a broad variation, often a but slight and subtle variation—the different courses of thought which are uppermost in each discipline, even then the unity of the final end and aim is still apparent. To employ the actual words of that discipline with which we ourselves are all of us most familiar, and the words of which, therefore, come most home to us, that final end and aim is “that we might be partakers of the divine nature.” These are the words of a Hebrew apostle, but of Hellenism and Hebraism alike this is, I say, the aim. When the two are confronted, as they very often are confronted, it is nearly always with what I may call a rhetorical purpose; the speaker’s whole design is to exalt and enthroned one of the two, and he uses the other only as a foil and to enable him the better to give effect to his purpose. Obviously, with us, it is usually Hellenism which is thus reduced to minister to the triumph of Hebraism. There is a sermon on Greece and the Greek spirit by a man never to be mentioned without interest and respect, Frederick Robertson, in which this rhetorical use of Greece and the Greek spirit, and the inadequate exhibition of them necessarily consequent upon this, is almost ludicrous, and would be censurable if it were not to be explained by the exigences of a sermon. On the other hand, Heinrich Heine, and other writers of his turn, give us the spectacle of the tables completely turned, and of Hebraism brought in just as a foil and contrast to Hellenism, and to make the superiority of Hellenism more manifest. In both those cases there is injustice and misrepresentation; the aim and end of both Hebraism and Hellenism is, as I have said, one and the same, and this aim and end is august and admirable.

Still, they pursue this aim by very different courses. The uppermost idea with Hellenism is to see things as they really are; the uppermost idea with Hebraism is conduct and obedience. Nothing can do away with this ineffaceable difference; the Greek quarrel with the body and its desires is, that they hinder right thinking, the Hebrew quarrel with them is, that they hinder right acting. “He that keepeth the law, happy is he;” “There is nothing sweeter than to take heed unto the commandments of the Lord;” that is the Hebrew notion of felicity; and, pursued with passion and tenacity, this notion would not let the Hebrew rest till, as is well known, he had, at last, got out of the law a network of prescriptions to enwrap his whole life, to govern every moment of it, every impulse, every action. The Greek notion of felicity, on the other hand, is perfectly conveyed in these words of a great French moralist: “*C'est le bonheur des hommes*”—when? when they turn from their iniquities?—no; when they exercise themselves in the law of the Lord day and night?—no; when they lose their life to save it?—no; when they walk about the New Jerusalem with palms in their hands?—no; but when they think aright, when their thought hits—“*quand ils pensent juste*.”—At the bottom of both the Greek and the Hebrew notion is the desire, native in man, for

reason and the will of God, the feeling after the universal order, in a word, the love of God ; but, while Hebraism seizes on certain plain, capital intimations of the universal order, and rivets itself, one may say, with unequalled grandeur of earnestness and intensity to the study and observance of them, the bent of Hellenism is to follow, with flexible activity, the whole play of the universal order, to be apprehensive of missing any part of it, of sacrificing one part to another, to slip away from resting in this or that intimation of it, however capital. An unclouded clearness of mind, an unimpeded play of thought, is what this bent drives at. The governing idea of Hellenism is spontaneity of consciousness ; that of Hebraism, strictness of conscience.

Christianity changed nothing in this essential bent of Hebraism to set doing above knowing. Self-conquest, the following not our own individual will, but the will of God, *obedience*, is the fundamental idea of this form, also, of the discipline to which we have attached the general name of Hebraism. Only, as the old law and the network of prescriptions with which it enveloped human life were evidently a motive power not driving and searching enough to produce the result aimed at—patient continuance in well doing, self-conquest—Christianity substituted for them boundless devotion to that inspiring and affecting pattern of self-conquest offered by Christ ; and by the new motive power, of which the essence was this, though the love and admiration of Christian churches have for centuries been employed in varying, amplifying, and adorning the plain description of it, Christianity, as St. Paul truly says, “establishes the law,” and in the strength of the ampler power which she has thus supplied to fulfil it, has accomplished the miracles, which we all see, of her history.

So long as we do not forget that both Hellenism and Hebraism are profound and admirable manifestations of man's life, tendencies, and powers, and that both of them aim at a like final result, we can hardly insist too strongly on the divergence of line and of operation with which they proceed. It is a divergence so great that it most truly, as the prophet Zechariah says, “has raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece !” The difference whether it is by doing or by knowing that we set most store, and the practical consequences which follow from this difference, leave their mark on all the history of our race and of its development. Language may be abundantly quoted from both Hellenism and Hebraism to make it seem that one follows the same current as the other towards the same goal. They are borne towards the same goal ; but the currents which bear them are infinitely different. It is true, Solomon will praise knowing : “Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it ;” and in the New Testament, again, Christ is a “light,” and “truth makes us free.” It is true Aristotle will undervalue knowing : in what concerns virtue, says he, three things are necessary—knowledge, deliberate will, and perseverance ; but, whereas the two last are all-important, the first is a matter of little importance.” It is true that with the same

impatience with which St. James enjoins a man to be not a forgetful hearer, but a *doer of the word*, Epictetus exhorts us to *do* what we have demonstrated to ourselves we ought to do ; or he taunts us with futility, for being armed at all points to prove that lying is wrong, yet all the time continuing to lie. It is true, Plato, in words which are almost the words of the New Testament, or the Imitation, calls life a learning to die. But underneath the superficial agreement the fundamental divergence still subsists. The understanding of Solomon is "the walking in the way of the commandments ;" this is "the way of peace," and it is of this that blessedness comes. In the New Testament, the truth which gives us the peace of God and makes us free, is the love of Christ constraining us to crucify, as he did, and with a like purpose of moral regeneration, the flesh with its affections and lusts, and thus establishing, as we have seen, the law. To St. Paul, it appears possible to "hold the truth in unrighteousness," which is just what Socrates judged impossible. "The moral virtues, on the other hand, are with Aristotle but the porch and access to the intellectual, and with these last is blessedness. That partaking of the divine life, which both Hellenism and Hebraism, as we have said, fix as their crowning aim, Plato expressly denies to the man of practical virtue merely, of self-conquest with any other motive than that of perfect intellectual vision ; he reserves it for the lover of pure knowledge, of seeing things as they really are—the φιλομαθής.

Both Hellenism and Hebraism arise out of the wants of human nature, and address themselves to satisfying those wants. But their methods are so different, they lay stress on such different points, and call into being by their respective disciplines such different activities, that the face which human nature presents when it passes from the hands of one of them to those of the other, is no longer the same. To get rid of one's ignorance, to see things as they are, and by seeing them as they are to see them in their beauty, is the simple and attractive ideal which Hellenism holds out before human nature ; and from the simplicity and charm of this ideal, Hellenism, and human life in the hands of Hellenism, is invested with a kind of aerial ease, clearness, and radiancy ; they are full of what we call sweetness and light. Difficulties are kept out of view, and the beauty and rationalness of the ideal have all our thoughts. "The best man is he who most tries to perfect himself, and the happiest man is he who most feels that he is perfecting himself,"—this account of the matter by Socrates, the true Socrates of the *Memorabilia*, has something so simple, spontaneous, and unsophisticated about it, that it seems to fill us with clearness and hope when we hear it. But there is a saying which I have heard attributed to Mr. Carlyle about Socrates—a very happy saying, whether it is really Mr. Carlyle's or not—which excellently marks the essential point in which Hebraism differs from Hellenism. "Socrates," this saying runs, "is terribly at ease in Zion." Hebraism—and here is the source of its wonderful strength—has always been severely preoccupied with a severe

sense of the impossibility of being at ease in Zion ; of the difficulties which oppose themselves to man's pursuit or attainment of that perfection of which Socrates talks so hopefully, and, as from this point of view one might almost say, so glibly. It is all very well to talk of getting rid of one's ignorance, of seeing things in their reality, seeing them in their beauty ; but how is this to be done when there is something which thwarts and spoils all our efforts ? This something is sin ; and the space which sin fills in Hebraism, as compared with Hellenism, is indeed prodigious. This obstacle to perfection fills the whole scene, and perfection appears remote and rising away from earth, in the background. Under the name of sin, the difficulties of knowing oneself and conquering oneself which impede man's passage to perfection, become, for Hebraism, a positive, active entity hostile to man, a mysterious power which I heard Dr. Pusey the other day, in one of his impressive sermons, compare to a hideous hunchback seated on our shoulders, and which it is the main business of our lives to hate and oppose. The discipline of the Old Testament may be summed up as a discipline teaching us to abhor and flee from sin ; the discipline of the New Testament, as a discipline teaching us to die to it. As Hellenism speaks of thinking clearly, seeing things in their essence and beauty, as a grand and precious feat for man to achieve, so Hebraism speaks of becoming conscious of sin, of awakening to a sense of sin, as a feat of this kind. It is obvious to what wide divergence these differing tendencies, actively followed, must lead. As one passes and repasses from Hellenism to Hebraism, from Plato to St. Paul, one feels inclined to rub one's eyes and ask oneself whether man is indeed a gentle and simple being, showing the traces of a noble and divine nature, or an unhappy chained captive, labouring with groanings that cannot be uttered to free himself from the body of this death.

Apparently it was the Hellenic conception of human nature which was unsound, for the world could not live by it. Absolutely to call it unsound, however, is to fall into the common error of its Hebraising enemies ; but it was unsound at that particular moment of man's development, it was premature. The indispensable basis of conduct and self-control, the platform upon which alone the perfection aimed at by Greece can come into bloom, was not to be reached by our race so easily ; centuries of probation and discipline were needed to bring them to it. The bright promise of Hellenism faded, and Hebraism ruled the world. Then was seen that astonishing spectacle, so well marked by the often quoted words of the prophet Zechariah, when men of all languages of the nations took hold of the skirt of him that was a Jew, saying :—“ *We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* ” And the Hebraism which thus received and led a world all gone out of the way and altogether become unprofitable, was, and could not but be, the later, the more spiritual, the more attractive development of Hebraism ; Hebraism aiming at self-conquest and rescue

from the thrall of vile affections, not by obedience to the letter of a law, but by conformity to the image of a self-sacrificing example. To a world stricken with moral enervation Christianity offered its spectacle of an inspired self-sacrifice ; to men who refused themselves nothing, it showed one who refused himself everything—" *my Saviour banished joy*," says George Herbert. When the *alma Venus*, the life-giving and joy-giving power of nature, so fondly cherished by the Pagan world, could not save her followers from self-dissatisfaction and ennui, the severe words of the apostle came bracingly and refreshingly : " Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." For age after age, and generation after generation, our race, or all that part of our race which was most living and progressive, was baptized into a death, and endeavoured, by suffering in the flesh, to cease from sin. Of this endeavour, the animating labours and afflictions of early Christianity, the touching asceticism of mediæval Christianity, are the great historical manifestations. Literary monuments of it, each, in its own way, incomparable, remain in the Epistles of St. Paul, in St. Augustine's *Confessions*, and in the two original and simplest books of the *Imitation*.*

Of two disciplines laying their main stress, the one, on clear intelligence, the other, on firm obedience ; the one, on comprehensively knowing the grounds of one's duty, the other, on diligently practising it ; the one, on taking all possible care (to use Bishop Wilson's words again) that the light we have be not darkness, the other, that according to the best light we have, we diligently walk,—the priority naturally belongs to that discipline which braces man's moral powers, and founds for him an indispensable basis of character. And, therefore, it is justly said of the Jewish people, who were charged with setting powerfully forth that side of the divine order to which the words *conscience* and *self-conquest* point, that they were " entrusted with the oracles of God," as it is justly said of Christianity which followed Judaism and which set forth this side with a much deeper effectiveness and a much wider influence, that the wisdom of the old Pagan world was foolishness compared to it. No words of devotion and admiration can be too strong to render thanks to these great forces which have so borne forward humanity in its appointed work of coming to the knowledge and possession of itself; above all, at those great moments when their action was the wholesomest and the most necessary. But the evolution of these forces, separately and in themselves, is not the whole evolution of humanity —their single history is not the whole history of man; whereas their admirers are always apt to make it stand for the whole history. Hebraism and Hellenism are, neither of them, the *law* of human development, as their admirers are prone to make them ; they are, each of them, *contributions*

* The two first books.

to human development—august contributions, invaluable contributions ; and each showing themselves to us more august, more invaluable, more preponderant over the other, according to the moment in which we take them, and the relation in which we stand to them. The nations of our modern world, children of that immense and salutary movement which broke up the Pagan world, inevitably stand to Hellenism in a relation which dwarfs it, and to Hebraism in a relation which magnifies it. They are inevitably prone to take Hebraism as the law of human development, and not as simply a contribution to it, however precious. And yet the lesson must perforce be learned, that the human spirit is wider than the most priceless of the forces which move it, and that to the whole development of man Hebraism itself is, like Hellenism, but a contribution.

Perhaps this may be made clearer by an illustration drawn from the treatment of a single great idea which has profoundly engaged the human spirit, and has given it eminent opportunities for showing its nobleness and energy. It surely must be perceived that the idea of the immortality of the soul, as this idea rises in its generality before the human spirit, is something grander, truer, and more satisfying than the forms by which St. Paul, in the famous chapter of the Epistle to the Corinthians, and Plato, in the *Phædo*, endeavour to develope and establish it. Who does not feel, that the argumentation with which the Hebrew apostle goes about to expound this great idea is confused and inconclusive, and that the reasoning, drawn from analogies of likeness and equality, which is employed upon it by the Greek philosopher, is over-subtle and sterile ? Above and beyond the inadequate solutions which Hebraism and Hellenism here attempt, extends the immense and august problem itself, and the human spirit which gave birth to it.

Meanwhile, by alternations of Hebraism and Hellenism, of man's intellectual and moral impulses, of the effort to see things as they really are, and the effort to win peace by self-conquest, the human spirit proceeds, and each of these two forces has its appointed hours of culmination and seasons of rule. As the great movement of Christianity was a triumph of Hebraism and man's moral impulses, so the great movement which goes by the name of the Renaissance (but why should we not give to this foreign word, destined to become of more common use amongst us, a more English form, and say Renascence ?) was an uprising and re-instatement of man's intellectual impulses and of Hellenism. We in England, the devoted children of Protestantism, chiefly know the Renascence by its subordinate and secondary side of the Reformation. The Reformation has been often called a Hebraising revival, a return to the ardour and sincerity of primitive Christianity. No one, however, can study the development of Protestantism and of Protestant churches without feeling that into the Reformation too,—Hebraising child of the Renascence and offspring of its fervour rather than its intelligence, as it undoubtedly was,—the subtle Hellenic leaven of the Renascence found its way, and the exact respective

parts in the Reformation, of Hebraism and of Hellenism, are not easy to separate. But what we may with truth say is, that all which Protestantism was to itself clearly conscious of, all which it succeeded in clearly setting forth in words, had the characters of Hebraism rather than of Hellenism. The Reformation was strong, in that it was an earnest return to the Bible and to doing from the heart the will of God as there written ; it was weak, in that it never consciously grasped or applied the central idea of the Renaissance—the Hellenic idea of pursuing, in all lines of activity, the law and science, to use Plato's words, of things as they really are. Whatever superiority, therefore, Protestantism had over Catholicism was a moral superiority, a superiority arising out of its greater sincerity and earnestness,—at the moment of its apparition at any rate,—in dealing with the heart and conscience ; its pretensions to an intellectual superiority are in general quite illusory. For Hellenism, for the thinking side in man as distinguished from the acting side, the attitude of mind of Protestantism towards the Bible in no respect differs from the attitude of mind of Catholicism towards the Church. The mental habit of him who imagines that Balaam's ass spoke, in no respect differs from the mental habit of him who imagines that a Madonna of wood or stone winked ; and the one, who says that God's Church makes him believe what he believes, and the other, who says that God's Word makes him believe what he believes, are for the philosopher perfectly alike in not really and truly knowing, when they say *God's Church* and *God's Word*, what it is they say, or whereto they affirm.

I do not think it has been enough observed how in the seventeenth century a fate befell Hellenism in some respects analogous to that which befell it at the commencement of our era. The Renaissance, that great awakening of Hellenism, that irresistible return of humanity to nature and to seeing things as they are, which in art, in literature, and in physics produced such splendid fruits, had, like the anterior Hellenism of the Pagan world, a side of moral weakness and of relaxation or insensibility of the moral fibre, which in Italy showed itself with the most startling plainness, but which in France, England, and other countries was very apparent too. Again this loss of spiritual balance, this exclusive preponderance given to man's perceiving and knowing side, this unnatural defect of his feeling and acting side, provoked a reaction. Let us trace that reaction where it most nearly concerns us.

Science has now made visible to everybody the great and pregnant elements of difference which lie in race, and in how signal a manner they make the genius and history of an Indo-European people vary from those of a Semitic people. Hellenism is of Indo-European growth, Hebraism is of Semitic growth, and we English, a nation of Indo-European stock, seem to belong naturally to the movement of Hellenism. But nothing more strongly marks the essential unity of man than the affinities we can perceive, in this point or that, between members of one

family of peoples and members of another ; and no affinity of this kind is more strongly marked than that likeness in the strength and prominence of the moral fibre, which, notwithstanding immense elements of difference, knits in some special sort the genius and history of us English, and of our American descendants across the Atlantic, to the genius and history of the Hebrew people. Puritanism, which has been so great a power in the English nation, and in the strongest part of the English nation, was originally the reaction, in the seventeenth century, of the conscience and moral sense of our race, against the moral indifference and lax rule of conduct which in the sixteenth century came in with the Renaissance. It was a reaction of Hebraism against Hellenism ; and it powerfully manifested itself, as was natural, in a people with much of what we call a Hebraising turn, with a signal affinity for the bent which was the master bent of Hebrew life. Eminently Indo-European by its *humour*, by the power it shows, through this gift, of imaginatively acknowledging the multiform aspects of the problem of life, and of thus getting itself unfixed from its own over-certainty, of smiling at its own over-tenacity, our race has yet (and a great part of its strength lies here), in matters of practical life and moral conduct, a strong share of the assuredness, the tenacity, the intensity of the Hebrews. This turn manifested itself in Puritanism, and has had a great part in shaping our history for the last two hundred years. Undoubtedly it checked and changed amongst us that movement of the Renaissance which we see producing in the reign of Elizabeth such wonderful fruits ; undoubtedly it stopped the prominent rule and direct development of that order of ideas which we call by the name of Hellenism, and gave the first rank to a different order of ideas. Apparently, too, as we said of the former defeat of Hellenism, if Hellenism was defeated, this shows that Hellenism was imperfect, and that its ascendancy at that moment would not have been for the world's good. Yet there is a very important difference between the defeat inflicted on Hellenism by Christianity eighteen hundred years ago, and the check given to the Renaissance by Puritanism. The greatness of the difference is well measured by the difference in force, beauty, significance and usefulness, between primitive Christianity and Protestantism. Eighteen hundred years ago it was altogether the hour of Hebraism ; primitive Christianity was legitimately and truly the ascendant force in the world at that time, and the way of mankind's progress lay through its full development. Another hour in man's development began in the fifteenth century, and the main road of his progress then lay for a time through Hellenism. Puritanism was no longer the central current of the world's progress, it was a side stream crossing the central current and checking it. The cross and the check may have been necessary and salutary, but that does not do away with the essential difference between the main stream of man's advance and a cross or side stream. For more than two hundred years the main stream of man's advance has moved towards knowing himself and

the world, seeing things as they are, spontaneity of consciousness; the main impulse of a great part, and that the strongest part, of our nation, has been towards strictness of conscience. They have made the secondary the principal at the wrong moment, and the principal they have at the wrong moment treated as secondary. This contravention of the natural order has produced, as such contravention always must produce, a certain confusion and false movement, of which we are now beginning to feel, in almost every direction, the inconvenience.

The matter here opened is so large, and the trains of thought to which it gives rise are so manifold, that we must be careful to limit ourselves scrupulously to what has a direct bearing upon our present discussion. We have found that at the bottom of our present unsettled state, so full of the seeds of trouble, lies the notion of its being the prime right and happiness, for each of us, to be doing, and to be doing freely and as he likes. We have found at the bottom of it the disbelief in right reason as a lawful authority. It was easy to show from our practice and current history that this is so; but it was impossible to show why it is so without taking a somewhat wider sweep and going into things a little more deeply. Why, in fact, should good, well-meaning, energetic, sensible people, like the bulk of our countrymen, come to have such light belief in right reason, and such an exaggerated value for their own independent doing, however crude? The answer is: because of an exclusive and excessive development in them, without due allowance for time, place, and circumstance, of that side of human nature, and that group of human forces, to which we have given the general name of Hebraism. Because they have thought their real and only important obedience was owed to a power not of this world, and that this power was interested in the moral side of their nature almost exclusively. Thus they have been led to regard in themselves as the one thing needful, strictness of conscience, the staunch adherence to some fixed law of doing we have got already, instead of spontaneity of consciousness, which tends continually to enlarge our whole law of doing. They think they have in their religion a sufficient basis for the whole of their life fixed and certain for ever, a full law of conduct and a full law of thought, so far as thought is needed, as well; whereas what they really have is a law of conduct, a law of unexampled power for enabling them to war against the law of sin in their members, and not to serve it in the lusts thereof. The book which contains this invaluable law they call the Word of God, and attribute to it, as I have said, and as, indeed, is perfectly well known, a reach and sufficiency co-extensive with all the wants of human nature. This might, no doubt, be so, if humanity were not the composite thing it is, if it had only, or eminently, a moral side and the group of instincts and powers which we call moral. But it has besides, and no less eminently, an intellectual side and the group of instincts and powers which we call intellectual. No doubt mankind makes in general its progress in a fashion which gives at one time full swing to one of

these groups of instincts, at another time to the other, and man's faculties are so intertwined, that when his moral side and the current of force which we call Hebraism, is uppermost, this side will manage somehow to provide, or appear to provide, satisfaction for his intellectual needs; and when his moral side, and the current of force which we call Hellenism, is uppermost, this, again, will provide, or appear to provide, satisfaction for men's moral needs. But sooner or later it becomes manifest that when the two sides of humanity proceed in this fashion of alternate preponderance, and not of mutual understanding and balance, the side which is uppermost does not really provide in a satisfactory manner for the needs of the side which is undermost, and a state of struggle and confusion is the result. The Hellenic half of our nature bearing rule makes a sort of provision for the Hebrew half, but it turns out to be an inadequate provision; and again the Hebrew half of our nature bearing rule makes a sort of provision for the Hellenic half, but this, too, turns out to be an inadequate provision. The true and smooth order of humanity's development is not reached in either way. And therefore, while we willingly admit with the Christian apostle that the world by wisdom—that is, by the isolated preponderance of its intellectual impulses—knew not God, or the true order of things, it is yet necessary, also, to set up a sort of converse to this proposition, and to say (what is equally true) that the world by Puritanism knew not God. And it is on this converse of the apostle's proposition that it is particularly needful to insist in our own country just at present.

Here, indeed, is the answer to many criticisms which have been addressed to all that we have said in praise of sweetness and light. Sweetness and light evidently have to do with the bent or side in humanity which we call Hellenic. Greek intelligence has obviously for its essence the instinct for what Plato calls the true, firm, the intelligible law of things; the love of light, of seeing things as they are. Even in the natural sciences, where the Greeks had not time and means adequately to apply this instinct, and where we have gone a great deal further than they did, it is this instinct which is the root of the whole matter and the ground of all our success, and this instinct the world has mainly learnt of the Greeks, inasmuch as they are humanity's most signal manifestation of it. Greek art, again, Greek beauty, have their root in the same impulse to see things as they really are, inasmuch as both rest on fidelity to nature—the *best* nature—and on a delicate discrimination of what this best nature is. To say we work for sweetness and light, then, is only another way of saying that we work for Hellenism. But, oh! cry many people, sweetness and light are not enough; you must put strength or energy along with them, and make a kind of trinity of strength, sweetness and light, and then, perhaps, you may do some good. That is to say, we are to join Hebraism, strictness of the moral conscience, and manful walking by the best light we have, together with Hellenism, inculcate both, and rehearse the praises of

both. Or, rather, we may praise both in conjunction, but we must be careful to praise Hebraism most. "Culture," says an acute, though somewhat rigid critic, Mr. Sidgwick, "diffuses sweetness and light. I do not undervalue these blessings, but religion gives fire and strength, and the world wants fire and strength even more than sweetness and light." By religion, let me explain, Mr. Sidgwick here means particularly that Puritanism on the insufficiency of which I have been commenting and to which he says I am unfair. Now, no doubt, it is possible to be a fanatical partisan of light and the instincts which push us to it, a fanatical enemy of strictness of moral conscience and the instincts which push us to it; a fanaticism of this sort deforms and vulgarises the well-known work, in some respects so remarkable, of the late Mr. Buckle. Such a fanaticism carries its own mark with it, in lacking sweetness, and its own penalty, in that, lacking sweetness, it comes in the end to lack light too. And the Greeks—the great exponents of humanity's bent for sweetness and light united, of its perception that the truth of things must be at the same time beauty—singularly escaped the fanaticism which we moderns, whether we Hellenise or whether we Hebraise, are so apt to show, and arrived—though failing, as has been said, to give adequate practical satisfaction to the claims of man's moral side—at the idea of a comprehensive adjustment of the claims of both the sides in man, the moral as well as the intellectual, of a full estimate of both, and of a reconciliation of both, an idea which is philosophically of the greatest value, and the best of lessons for us moderns. So we ought to have no difficulty in conceding to Mr. Sidgwick that manful walking by the best light one has—fire and strength as he calls it—has its high value as well as culture, the endeavour to see things in their truth and beauty, the pursuit of sweetness and light. But whether at this or that time, and to this or that set of persons, one ought to insist most on the praises of fire and strength, or on the praises of sweetness and light, must depend, one would think, on the circumstances and needs of that particular time and those particular persons. And all that we have been saying, and indeed any glance at the world around us, shows that with us, with the most respectable and strongest part of us, the ruling force is now, and long has been, a Puritan force, the care for fire and strength, strictness of conscience, Hebraism, rather than the care for sweetness and light, spontaneity of consciousness, Hellenism. Well, then, what is the good of our now rehearsing the praises of fire and strength to ourselves, who dwell too exclusively on them already? When Mr. Sidgwick says so broadly that the world wants fire and strength even more than sweetness and light, is he not carried away by a turn for powerful generalisation? does he not forget that the world is not all of one piece, and every piece with the same needs at the same time? It may be true that the Roman world, at the beginning of our era, or Leo the Tenth's Court, at the time of the Reformation, or French society in the eighteenth century, needed fire and strength even

more than sweetness and light ; but can it be said that the Barbarians who overran the empire, needed fire and strength even more than sweetness and light ; or that the Puritans needed them more, or that Mr. Murphy, the Birmingham lecturer, or that the Rev. W. Cattle (for so, I am told, we ought to call him, and not Cassel), and his friends, need them more ?

The Puritan's great danger is that he imagines himself in possession of a rule telling him the *unum necessarium*, or one thing needful, remains satisfied with a very crude conception of what this rule really is, and what it tells him, thinks he has now knowledge, and henceforth needs only to act, and in this dangerous state of assurance and self-satisfaction, proceeds to give full swing to a number of the instincts of his ordinary self. Some of the instincts of his ordinary self he has, by the help of his rule of life, conquered ; but others which he has not conquered by this help he is so far from perceiving to need conquering, and to be instincts of an inferior self, that he even fancies it to be his right and duty, in virtue of having conquered a limited part of himself, to give unchoked swing to the remainder. He is, I say, a victim of Hebraism, of the tendency to cultivate strictness of conscience rather than spontaneity of consciousness. And what he wants is a larger conception of human nature, showing him the number of other points at which his nature must come to its best, besides the points which he himself knows and thinks of. There is no *unum necessarium*, or one thing needful, which can free human nature from the obligation of trying to come to its best at all these points, and the real *unum necessarium* is to come there. Instead of our "one thing needful," justifying in us vulgarity, hideousness, ignorance, violence, our vulgarity, hideousness, ignorance, violence, are really so many touchstones which try our one thing needful, and which prove that in the state, at any rate, in which we ourselves have it, it is not all we want. And as the force which encourages us to stand staunch and fast by the rule and ground we have is Hebraism, so the force which encourages us to go back upon this rule, and to try the very ground on which we appear to stand, is Hellenism—a turn for giving our consciousness free play and enlarging its range. And what I say is, not that Hellenism is always for everybody more wanted than Hebraism, but that for the Rev. W. Cattle at this particular moment, and for the great majority of us his fellow-countrymen, it is more wanted.

Nothing is more striking than to observe in how many ways a limited conception of human nature, the notion of a one thing needful, a one side in us to be made uppermost, the disregard of a full and harmonious development of ourselves, tells injuriously on our thinking and acting. In the first place, our hold upon the rule or standard to which we look for our one thing needful, tends to become less and less near and vital, our conception of it more and more mechanical, and unlike the thing itself as it was conceived in the mind where it originated. The dealings of Puritanism with the writings of St. Paul afford a noteworthy illustra-

tion of this. Nowhere so much as in the writings of St. Paul, and in that great apostle's greatest work, the Epistle to the Romans, has Puritanism found what seemed to furnish it with the one thing needful, and to give it what it deemed canons of truth absolute and final. Now all writings, as has been already said, even the most precious writings, and the most fruitful, must inevitably from the very nature of things be but contributions to human thought and human development, which extend wider than they do ; and indeed, St. Paul, in the very Epistle of which we are speaking, shows, when he asks, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord ?"—who hath known, that is, the true and divine order of things in its entirety—shows that he himself acknowledges this fully. And we have already pointed out in an Epistle of St. Paul a great and vital idea of the human spirit—the idea of the immortality of the soul—transcending and spreading beyond, so to speak, the expositor's power to give it adequate definition and expression. But quite distinct from the question whether St. Paul's expression, or any man's expression, can be a perfect and final expression of truth, comes the question whether we rightly seize and understand his expression as it exists. Now, perfectly to seize another man's meaning, as it stood in his own mind, is not easy ; especially when the man is separated from us by such differences of race, training, time, and circumstance as St. Paul. But there are degrees of nearness in getting at a man's meaning ; and though we cannot arrive quite at what St. Paul had in his mind, yet we may come near it. And who, that comes thus near it, must not feel how terms which St. Paul employs in trying to follow, with his analysis of such profound power and originality, some of the most delicate, intricate, obscure, and contradictory workings and states of the human spirit, are detached and employed by Puritanism not in the connected and passing way in which St. Paul employs them, and for which alone words are really meant, but in an isolated, fixed, mechanical way, as if they were talismans, and how all trace and sense of St. Paul's true movement of ideas, and sustained masterly analysis, is thus lost ? Who, I say, that has watched Puritanism, the force which so strongly Hebraises, which so takes St. Paul's writings as something absolute and final containing the one thing needful, handle such terms as *grace*, *faith*, *election*, *righteousness*, but must feel not only that these terms have for the mind of Puritanism a sense false and misleading, but also that this sense is the most monstrous and grotesque caricature of the sense of St. Paul, and that his true meaning is by these worshippers of his words altogether lost ?

Or to take another eminent example, in which not Puritanism only, but one may say the whole religious world, by their mechanical use of St. Paul's writings, can be shown to miss or change his real meaning. The whole religious world, one may say, use now the word *resurrection*—a word which is so often in their thoughts and on their lips, and which they find so often in St. Paul's writings,

—in one sense only. They use it to mean a rising again after the physical death of the body. Now it is quite true that St. Paul speaks of resurrection in this sense, that he tries to describe and explain it, and that he condemns those who doubt and deny it. But it is true, also, that in nine cases out of ten where St. Paul thinks and speaks of resurrection, he thinks and speaks of it in a sense different from this; in the sense of a rising to a new life before the physical death of the body, and not after it. The idea on which we have already touched, the profound idea of being baptized into the death of the great exemplar of self-conquest and self-annulment, of repeating in our own person, by virtue of identification with our exemplar, his course of self-conquest and self-annulment, and of thus coming, within the limits of our present life, to a new life, in which, as in the death going before it, we are identified with our exemplar—this is the fruitful and original conception of being *risen with Christ* which possesses the mind of St. Paul, and this the central point round which, with such incomparable emotion and eloquence, all his teaching moves. For him, the life after our physical death is really in the main but a consequence and continuation of the inexhaustible energy of the new life thus originated on this side the grave. This grand Pauline idea of Christian resurrection is worthily rehearsed in one of the noblest collects of the Prayer-Book, and is destined, no doubt, to fill a more and more important place in the Christianity of the future; but almost as signal as is the essentialness of this characteristic idea in St. Paul's teaching, is the completeness with which the worshippers of St. Paul's words, as an absolute final expression of saving truth, have lost it, and have substituted for the apostle's living and near conception of a resurrection now, their mechanical and remote conception of a resurrection hereafter.

In short, so fatal is the notion of possessing, even in the most precious words or standards, the one thing needful, of having in them, once for all, a full and sufficient measure of light to guide us, and of there being no duty left for us except to make our practice square exactly with them—so fatal, I say, is this notion to the right knowledge and comprehension of the very words or standards we thus adopt, and to such strange distortions and perversions of them does it inevitably lead, that whenever we hear that commonplace which Hebraism, if we venture to inquire what a man knows, is so apt to bring out against us in disparagement of what we call culture, and in praise of a man's sticking to the one thing needful—he *knows*, says Hebraism, *his Bible!*—whenever we hear this said, we may, without any elaborate defence of culture, content ourselves with answering simply: “No man, who knows nothing else, knows even his Bible.”

Having undertaken to recommend culture, the endeavour to follow those instincts which carry us towards knowing things as they really are, towards a full harmonious development of our human nature, and

finding this recommendation questioned and spoken against, I have been obliged to show, at more length than I wished or intended, what are the instincts which seem to make us rather disregard seeing things as they are, and to carry us towards a partial, though powerful, development of our human nature. I have tried to point out that many of us have long followed this second set of instincts too exclusively, and how the time is come to give a more free play to the other set. The test of the insufficiency of the second set by themselves is the number of points in which, professing generally to pursue perfection, they have, after a long ascendancy, left our nature imperfect, and the faulty action, and faulty conception of our rule of action, in which, professing to regard action as all in all, and to have a sure rule of action, they have landed us. In all directions our habitual courses of action seem to be losing efficaciousness, credit, and control, both with others and even with ourselves; we see threatenings of confusion, and we want a clue to some firm order and authority. This we can only get by going back upon the actual instincts and forces which rule our life, getting behind them, seeing them as they really are, connecting them with other instincts and forces, and enlarging our whole view and rule of life. Once more, and for the last time, I must return to the subject, to try and show, in conclusion, how we are to do this.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.
